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AMAR CHITRA KATHA

Rs. 20

NO. 65

KRISHNA,

THE PLAYFUL

Bhagawat Purana

- THE DARLING OF GOKUL
- THE SUBDUER OF KALIYA
- THE UPHOLDER OF GOVARDHANA

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KRISHNA THE PLAYFUL

The Bhagawat Purana sings of the glory of Vishnu and his incarnations. The tenth chapter on which the present series is based, depicts the story of the life of Shri Krishna. Attributed to Vyasa, the author of Mahabharata, the Bhagawat is one of the most popular of the eighteen major Puranas.

Krishna, as depicted in the Bhagawat, plays childish pranks one moment and the next moment he reveals to Yashoda, a glimpse of the universe residing within his mouth.

He is dancing in the forest one day and killing demons the next. All this may seem puzzling. But each episode has a deeper meaning and can be explained if the actions of Krishna are understood as 'Lila' or divine play.

The three volumes presented here narrate the birth of Krishna in prison, his childhood days spent in Gokul and Vrindavan, and the various divine feats performed by young Krishna, including the lifting of Mount Govardhana.

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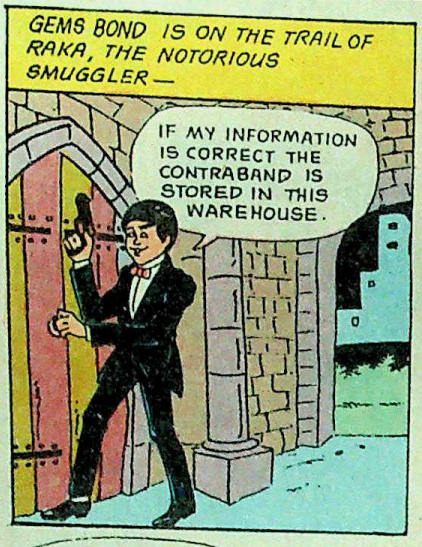

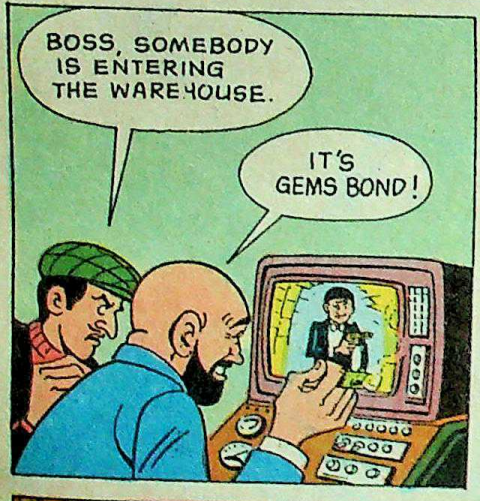

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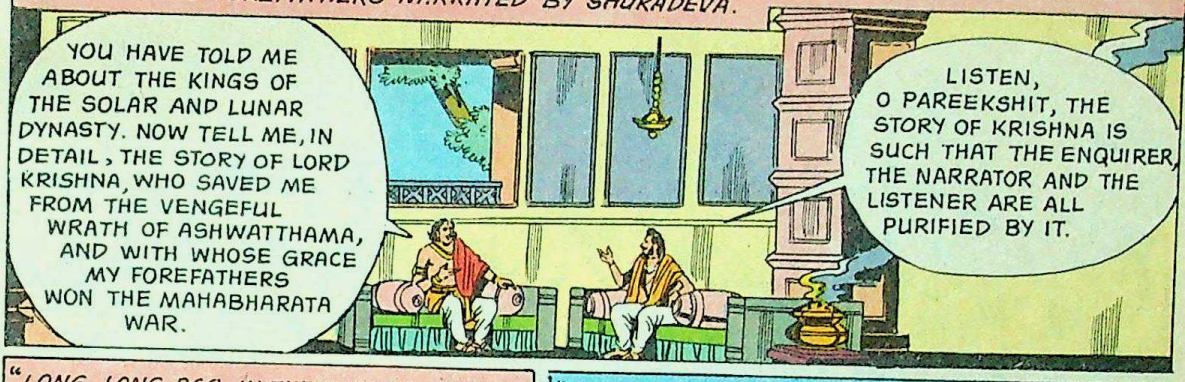
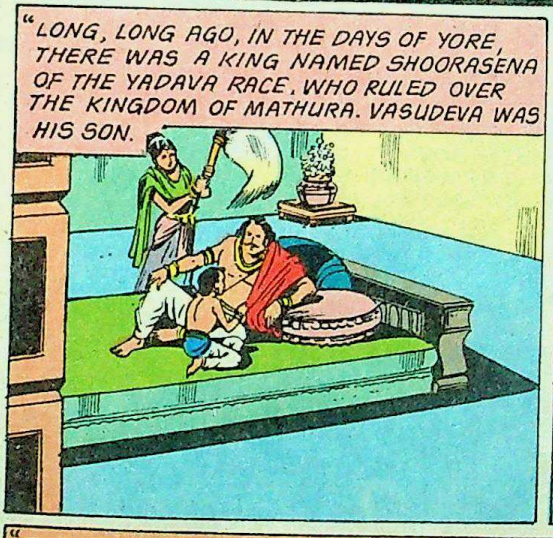
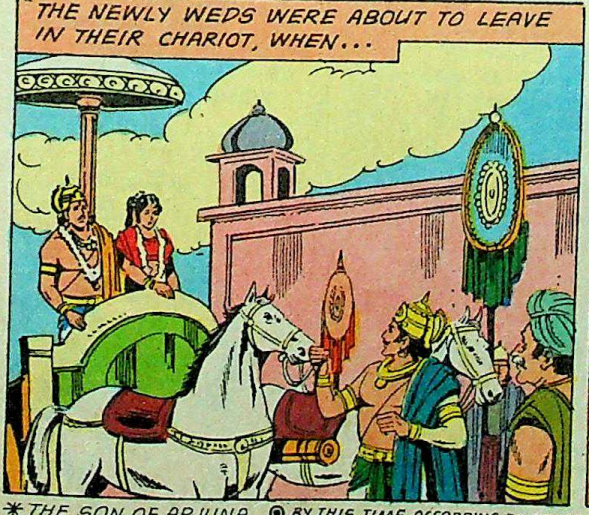
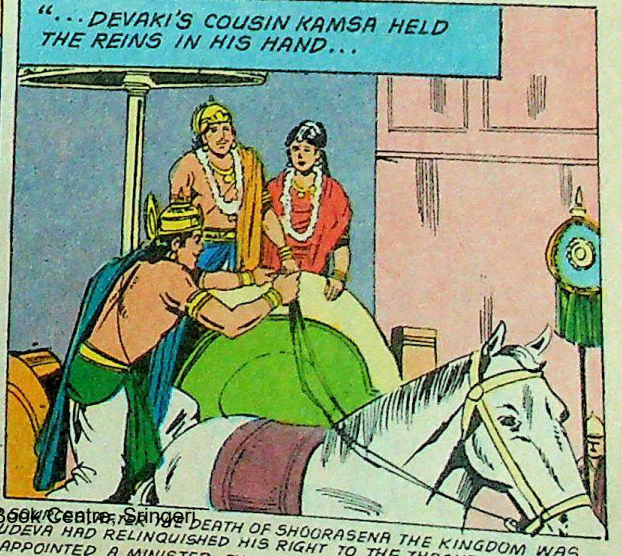
KRISHNA—THE DARLING OF GOKUL

PAREEKSHIT, THE SON OF ABHIMANYU,* WAS LISTENING WITH RAPT ATTENTION TO THE STORY OF HIS FOREFATHERS NARRATED BY SHUKADEVA.









* THE SON OF ARJUNA

◎ BY THIS TIME, ACCORDING TO OTHER BOOKS, AFTER THE DEATH OF SHOORASENA THE KINGDOM WAS RULED OVER BY UGRASENA. VASUDEVA HAD RELINQUISHED HIS RIGHT TO THE THRONE, PREFERRING TO BE A COWHERD AND HAD BEEN APPOINTED A MINISTER BY UGRASENA.

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"...AND INSISTED ON DRIVING THE CHARIOT HIMSELF.

"FOLLOWING THEM, AT A LITTLE DISTANCE, WERE FOUR HUNDRED CAPARISONED ELEPHANTS, FIFTEEN THOUSAND HORSES, NUMEROUS CHARIOTS CARRYING THE GIFTS BESTOWED ON THE BRIDAL PAIR BY DEVAKI'S FOND FATHER. TWO HUNDRED BEAUTIFULLY BEDECKED MAIDS WERE ALSO IN THE RETINUE.

"SUDDENLY, EVEN AS THE NOTES OF AUSPICIOUS MUSIC REACHED A CRESCENDO, A VOICE RANG OUT FROM THE HEAVENS.

BEWARE, YOU FOOL! THE EIGHTH-BORN OF THIS VERY WOMAN WILL SLAY YOU!

"THE CRUEL KAMSA, ABLAZE WITH ANGER AND FRIGHT, DREW HIS SWORD.

I WILL KILL HER RIGHT AWAY!

"VASUDEVA INTERVENED—

STOP KAMSA! YOU ARE THE GLORY OF YOUR RACE. MIGHTY WARRIORS RELATE STORIES OF YOUR VALOUR.

IT DOES NOT BECOME YOU TO KILL DEVAKI, A WOMAN, YOUR OWN COUSIN AND THAT TOO ON HER WEDDING DAY.

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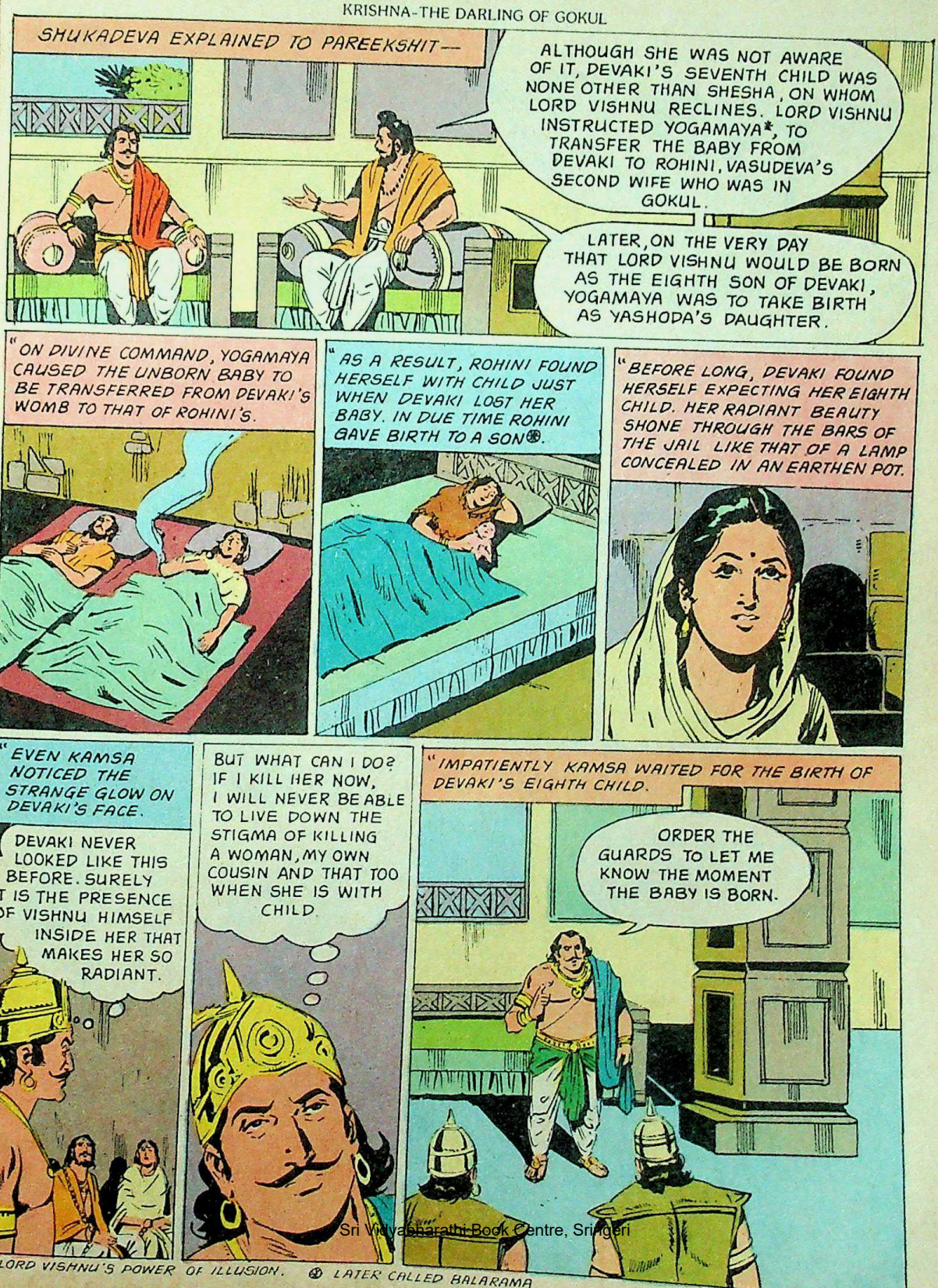

* LORD VISHNU'S POWER OF ILLUSION. ® LATER CALLED BALARAMA

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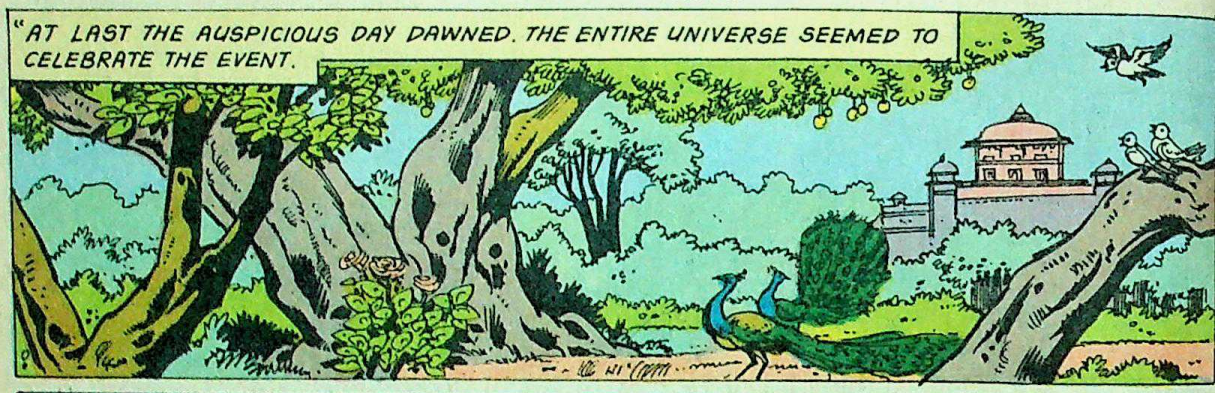

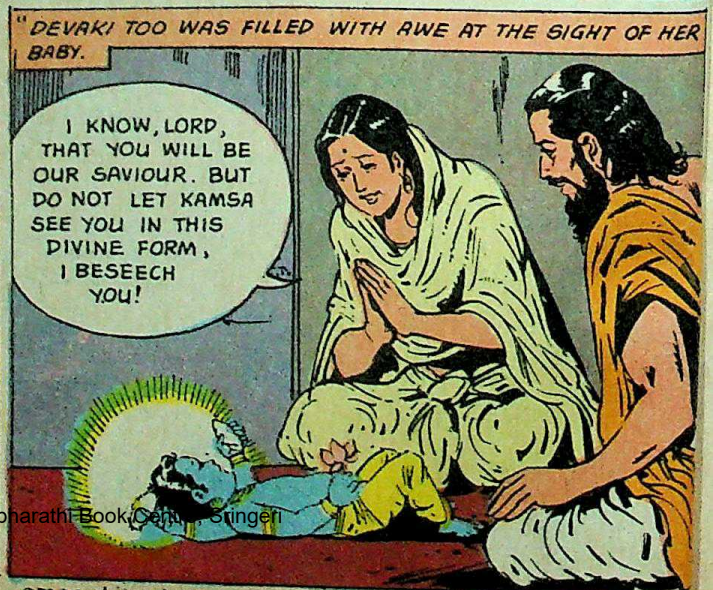

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"BUT KAMSA WAS UNMOVED. HE SEIZED THE BABY BY HER TINY LEGS...

"...AND DASHED HER AGAINST A STONE SURFACE.

"BUT THIS WAS NO ORDINARY BABY. THE DIVINE INFANT ROSE TOWARDS THE SKY AND MANIFESTED HERSELF AS AN EIGHT-ARMED GODDESS.

"ADDRESSING KAMSA, SHE SAID—

YOU FOOL! THE ONE WHO IS DESTINED TO DESTROY YOU STILL LIVES! DO NOT KILL OTHER INNOCENT INFANTS.

"THEN SHE DISAPPEARED.

"KAMSA WAS WONDERSTRUCK ON HEARING THIS PROCLAMATION. IN A DAZE, HE RELEASED DEVAKI AND VASUDEVA.

MY DEAR SISTER, WHAT A GREAT SINNER I HAVE BEEN TO KILL MY NEPHEWS. I REALLY REGRET MY ACTIONS.

"BUT HIS REPENTANCE WAS SHORT-LIVED. NEXT MORNING HE CALLED FOR HIS MINISTERS AND CRONIES TO RELATE THE EVENTS OF THE NIGHT.

...SO I LET VASUDEVA AND DEVAKI GO SINCE THE DIVINE BEING SAID THAT THE ONE WHO IS DESTINED TO KILL ME IS BORN ELSEWHERE.

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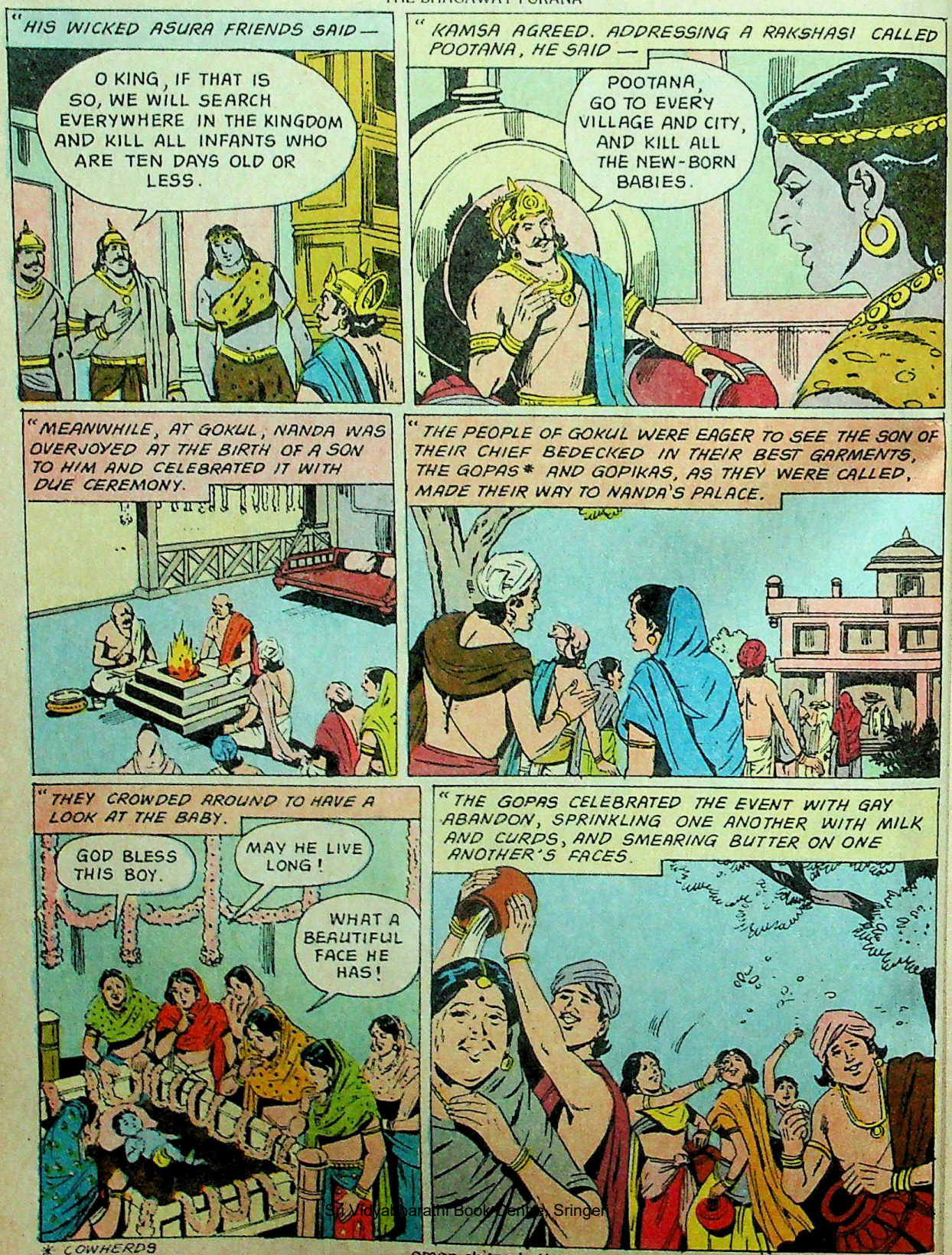

* COWHERDS

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"NANDA GAVE GENEROUS GIFTS TO HIS VISITORS.

"AFTER FEW DAYS, LEAVING GOKUL IN THE HANDS OF OTHER COWHERDS, NANDA WENT TO MATHURA TO PAY HIS ANNUAL DUES TO KAMSA.

"WHEN VASUDEVA HEARD OF HIS ARRIVAL, HE HASTENED TO MEET HIM.

"AFTER EMBRACING HIM AFFECTIONATELY, VASUDEVA SAID—

HOW FORTUNATE YOU TWO ARE TO GET A SON AFTER ALL THESE YEARS.

IT IS A PITY THAT WE SELDOM MEET. YOU AND YOUR WIFE LOOK AFTER ROHINI AND MY SON. I HOPE HE IS WELL AND LOOKS UPON YOU AS HIS PARENTS.

SO MANY OF YOUR SONS WERE KILLED BY KAMSA. EVEN YOUR LITTLE DAUGHTER DID NOT SURVIVE. VERILY, OUR LIFE IS GOVERNED BY DESTINY.

"VASUDEVA SAID—

NOW THAT YOU HAVE PAID YOUR ANNUAL DUES AND MET ME TOO, YOU MUST NOT TARRY HERE ANY LONGER. MANY CALAMITIES ARE LIKELY TO DESCEND ON GOKULA.

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"ON VASUDEVA'S ADVICE, NANDA MADE HIS WAY HOME.

WHY DID VASUDEVA SAY SUCH A THING, I WONDER. BUT HIS WORDS CAN NEVER BE FALSE. MAY GOD PROTECT US.

"WHILE NANDA WAS AWAY, THE WICKED POOTANA REACHED GOKUL IN THE FORM OF A BEAUTIFUL DAMSEL.

"SHE FOUND HER WAY INTO NANDA'S HOME AND BEHELD THE SLEEPING KRISHNA.

"SHE LIFTED HIM UP IN HER ARMS. BOTH ROHINI AND YASHODA WERE SURPRISED TO SEE THIS STRANGER, BUT WERE SO CARRIED AWAY BY HER BEAUTY THAT THEY DID NOT ASK ANY QUESTIONS.

"POOTANA TOOK THE BABY IN HER LAP AND BEGAN TO SUCKLE HIM.

AH! THE DEADLY POISON THAT I HAVE SMEARED ON MY BREASTS WILL SOON TAKE EFFECT!

"BUT LITTLE DID SHE KNOW THAT IT WAS HER LIFE THAT WAS IN DANGER. FOR THE INFANT, KRISHNA, SOON BEGAN TO SUCK THE VERY LIFE OUT OF HER.

AIEEE!! LET GO! LEAVE ME!

"SHE SHRIEKED AND SHRIEKED. UNABLE TO BEAR THE PAIN, SHE ASSUMED HER UGLY RAKSHASI FORM, AND COLLAPSED IN A HEAP.

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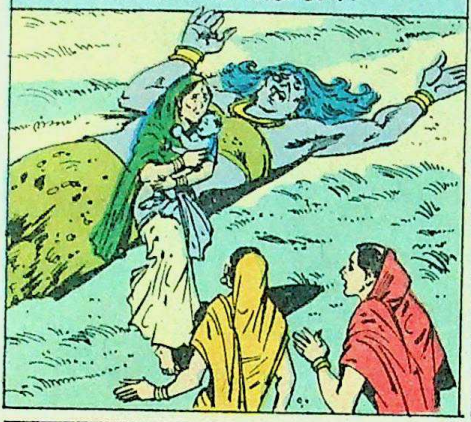
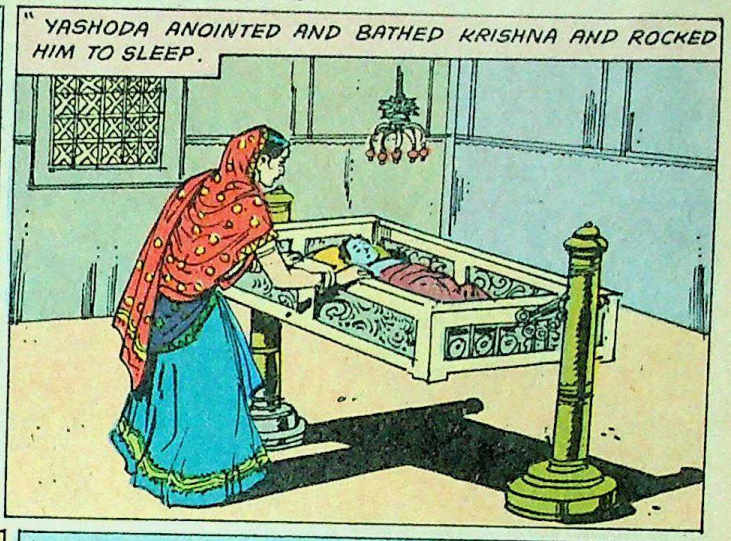
"BUT STILL KRISHNA WOULD NOT LET GO OF HER. THE PETRIFIED GOPIKAS HASTILY PULLED HIM AWAY AND TOOK HIM TO YASHODA.



"YASHODA ANOINTED AND BATHED KRISHNA AND ROCKED HIM TO SLEEP.



"WHEN NANDA AND HIS COMPANIONS RETURNED TO GOKUL, THEY WERE SURPRISED TO SEE POOTANA'S HIDEOUS SUPINE FORM.

WHAT VASUDEVA PROPHESIED HAS COME TRUE. HOW AMAZING!

"HE WAS ALL THE MORE ASTONISHED WHEN HE HEARD THAT IT WAS HIS KRISHNA WHO HAD TORMENTED AND KILLED POOTANA. HE PICKED UP HIS LITTLE SON AND KISSED HIM ON HIS FOREHEAD AGAIN AND AGAIN.

"NANDA AND YASHODA WATCHED THEIR SON GROW WITH DELIGHT. WHEN HE LEARNT TO TURN ON HIS SIDE, THE EVENT WAS CELEBRATED WITH SONG AND FEASTING.

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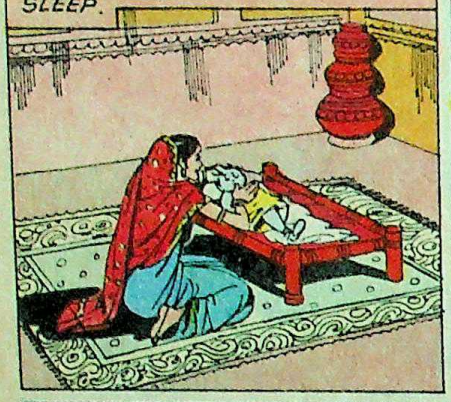
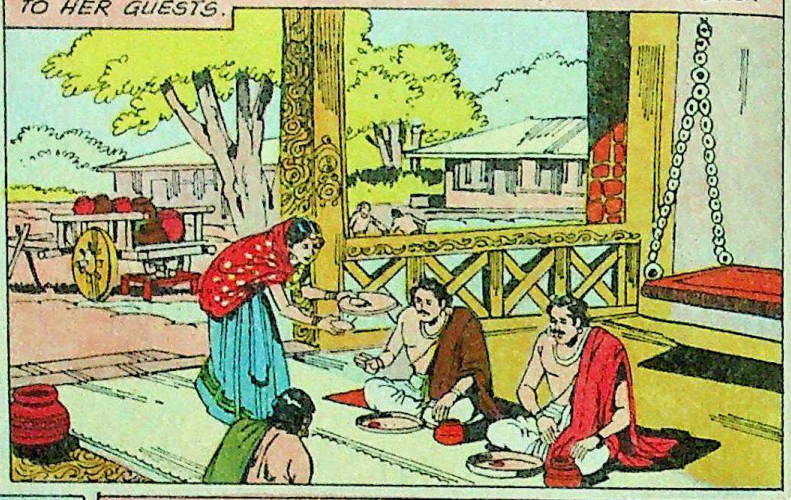
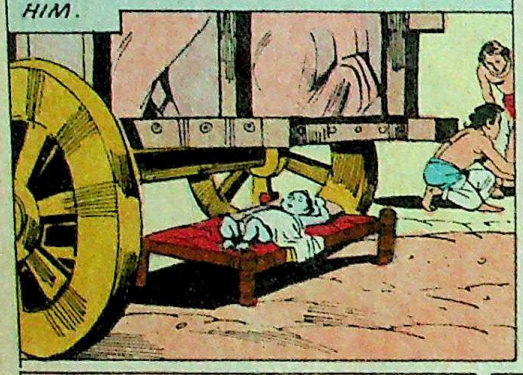
"ALL THE PEOPLE OF GOKUL HAD GATHERED AT NANDA'S HOUSE. SEEING THAT THE BABY WAS A LITTLE TIRED AFTER ALL THE FUSS, YASHODA FED HIM AND MADE HIM SLEEP.



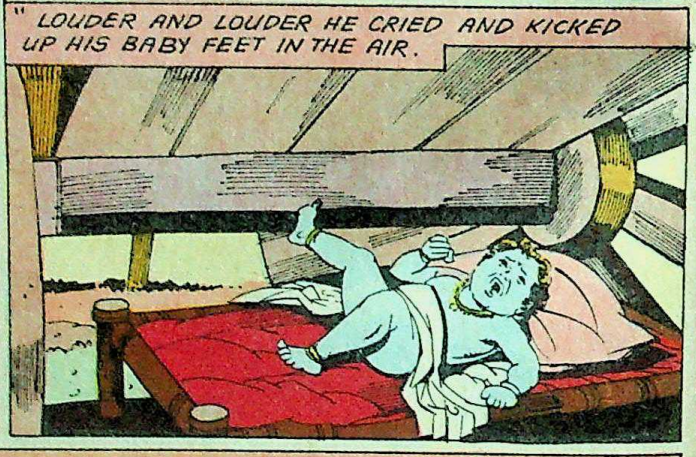
"PLACING HIS COT IN THE SHADE OF A CART, SHE WENT BACK TO HER GUESTS.



"AFTER A BRIEF NAP, KRISHNA WOKE UP AND BEGAN TO CRY. BUT YASHODA WAS TOO FAR AND TOO BUSY TO HEAR HIM.



"LOUDER AND LOUDER HE CRIED AND KICKED UP HIS BABY FEET IN THE AIR.



"BUT THE TOUCH OF THE TINY FEET WAS ENOUGH.

"THE NOISE OF THE VESSELS BREAKING BROUGHT THE GUESTS TO THE SPOT.

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"THE GENTLE BREEZE HAD TURNED INTO SUCH A TERRIBLE WHIRLWIND THAT IT SWOOPED THE BABY OFF.

"IT WAS TRINAVARTA, ANOTHER EVIL ASURA FRIEND OF KAMSA, WHO HAD APPEARED IN THE GUISE OF A WHIRLWIND TO DESTROY KRISHNA.

"THE ENTIRE GOKUL WAS FILLED BY DUST AND DARKNESS. NO ONE COULD SEE ANYTHING.

"YASHODA CAME RUNNING OUT.

OH! WHERE IS MY DARLING BABY? I HAD LEFT HIM HERE JUST NOW!

"WHEN THE WHIRLWIND HAD SUBSIDED—

WHAT HAPPENED, YASHODA?

MY SON! HE HAS JUST DISAPPEARED!

"MEANWHILE AS THE WICKED TRINAVARTA CARRIED THE BABY SKYWARDS, HE FOUND HIM BECOMING HEAVIER AND HEAVIER.

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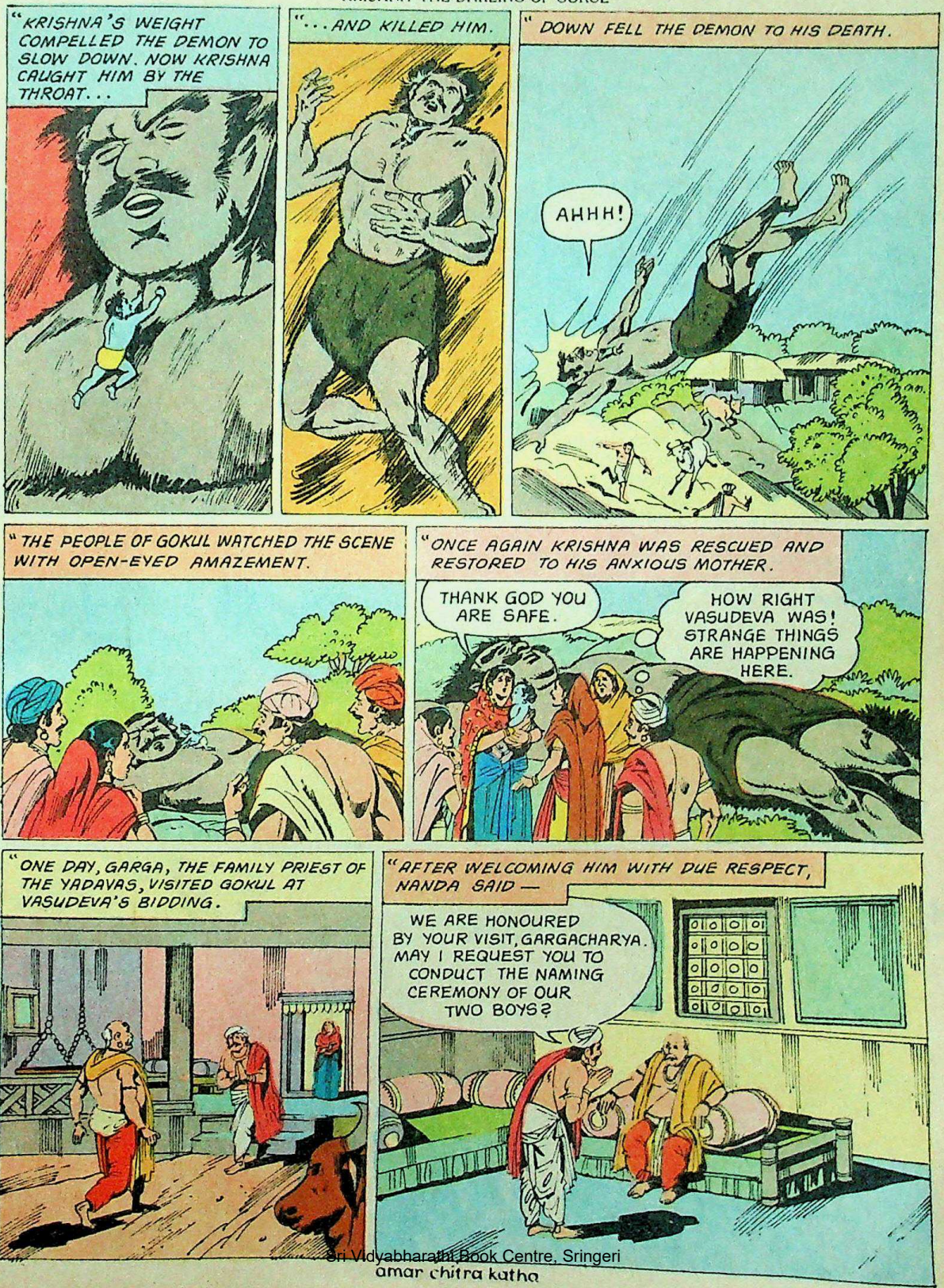

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"GARGA EXPLAINED—

I AM THE ROYAL PRIEST OF THE YADAVAS. IF THE NEWS OF MY PERFORMING THE CEREMONY OF THE BOYS REACHES KAMSA, HE WILL BE SUSPICIOUS.

EVER SINCE HE HEARD THAT HIS SLAYER HAS BEEN BORN ELSEWHERE, KAMSA HAS BEEN ON THE LOOKOUT FOR HIM. HE WOULD SURELY HAVE YOUR SON KILLED.

"NANDA SAID —

IN THAT CASE WE WILL DO EVERYTHING ON THE QUIET. NOT EVEN MY NEAR ONES WILL KNOW OF IT.

"SO IN ABSOLUTE SECRECY, WITHOUT ANY FANFARE, THE NAMING CEREMONY OF THE TWO BOYS WAS PERFORMED IN A COWSHED.

THIS SON OF ROHINI, WILL BE A CHARMING BOY, PLEASING PEOPLE WITH HIS GOOD QUALITIES. HENCE HE SHOULD BE CALLED RAMA. BECAUSE OF HIS PROWESS, HE WILL BE CALLED BALARAMA.*

YOUR OTHER DUSKY COMPLEXIONED SON WILL BE CALLED KRISHNA, BECAUSE OF HIS COLOUR. HE WILL BRING PLEASURE AND PROSPERITY TO YOU. TAKE GOOD CARE OF HIM.

"IN A FEW WEEKS BALARAMA AND KRISHNA LEARNT TO CRAWL. NOW THERE WAS NO STOPPING THE TWO BOYS. THEY WOULD WANDER ALL OVER GOKUL, DRAGGING THEIR LITTLE FEET ADORNED WITH ANKLETS THROUGH THE MUDDY PASTURES.

"THEIR CHILDISH PRANKS WERE A CONSTANT SOURCE OF AMUSEMENT TO THEIR MOTHERS.

YASHODA! COME AND SEE YOUR KRISHNA.

WHAT IS HE UP TO NOW?

*BALA = STRENGTH.

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"THE FRIGHTENED CALF RAN HELTER SKELTER.

SEE! HE'S BEING DRAGGED AWAY BY THE CALF.

JUST LOOK AT HIS FACE! HE'S ENJOYING IT!

"ROHINI AND YASHODA COULD NEVER BE SURE WHAT THE NAUGHTY PAIR WOULD DO NEXT.

YASHODA DEAR! THE HOUSE IS SO QUIET. THOSE TWO MUST BE UP TO SOME MISCHIEF! WILL YOU GO AND LOOK?

YES, I WILL! I HOPE THEY HAVEN'T CAUGHT HOLD OF A DOG IN THE STREET AS THEY DID THE OTHER DAY.

OR TRIED TO PICK UP A SWORD LIKE YESTERDAY!

"SOON YASHODA WAS BACK, DRAGGING THE TWO WITH HER.

YOU WERE RIGHT, ROHINI! I CAUGHT THEM JUST IN TIME, TRYING TO PEEP INTO THE WELL ON TIPTOE.

WHAT WILL THEY THINK OF NEXT?

"SOON KRISHNA AND BALARAMA LEARNT TO WALK AND RUN.

KRISHNA! BALARAMA! I SHOULD KEEP THEM TIED UP, I THINK! WHERE COULD THEY BE?

"SHE KNEW SOON ENOUGH.

YASHODA, YOU MUST CONTROL THAT NAUGHTY SON OF YOURS.

WHAT HAPPENED?

"EVERY DAY THERE WOULD BE FRESH COMPLAINTS FROM THE NEIGHBOURS.

HE ATE UP ALL THE BUTTER IN MY HOUSE!

AND HE BROKE THE POT ALSO.

HE IS ALL OVER OUR HOUSE. WHEN WE SCOLD HIM, HE JUST GIGGLES AND RUNS AWAY.

HE STEALS THE BUTTER AND GIVES IT TO HIS MONKEY FRIENDS.

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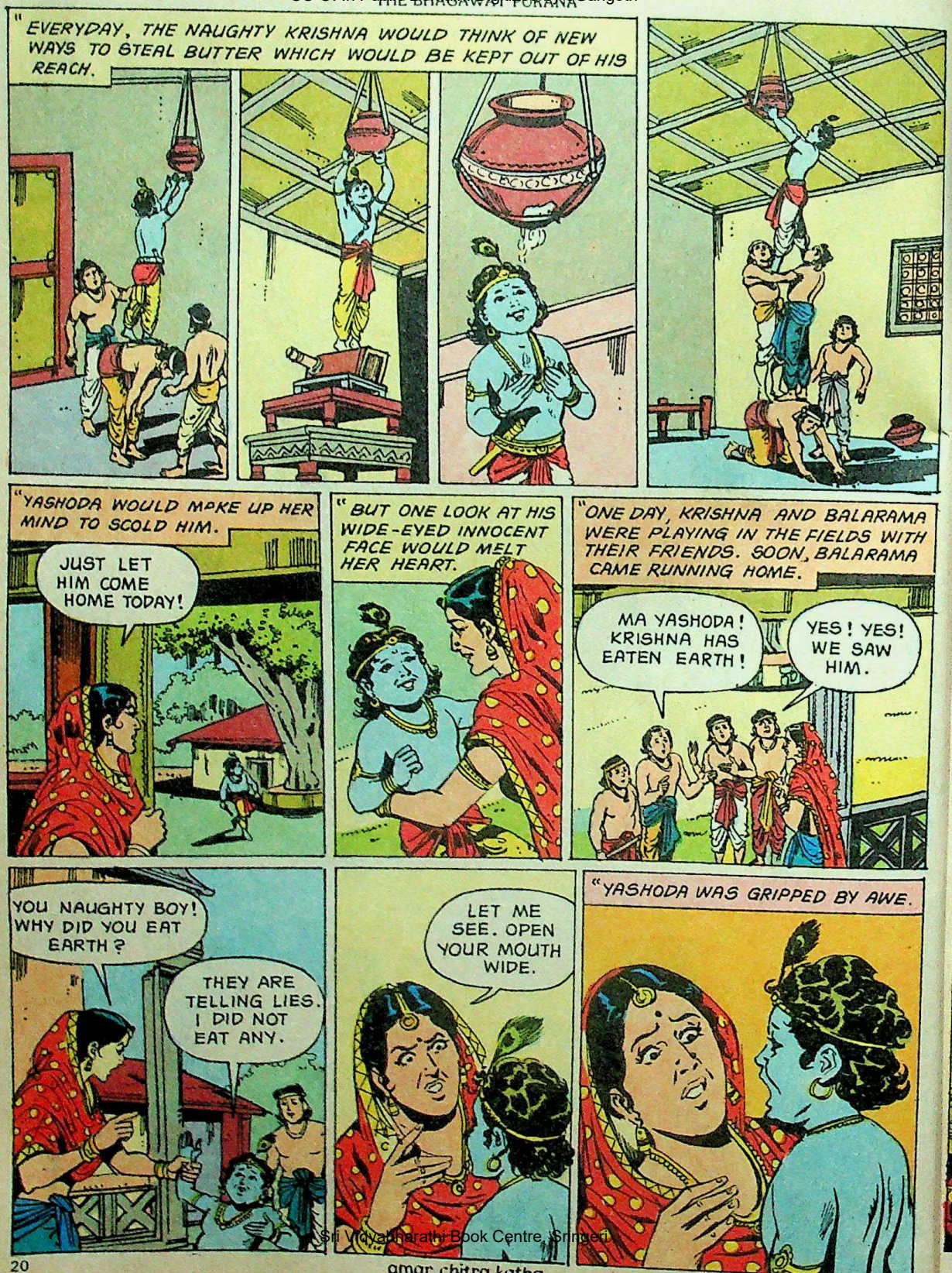

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"FOR IN KRISHNA'S MOUTH SHE COULD SEE THE SKY, THE EARTH, AND IN FACT, THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE.

SURELY I MUST BE DREAMING.

IS IT MY EGO THAT MAKES ME THINK LIKE THIS? HELP ME, GOD!

BUT SOON SHE MIRACULOUSLY FORGOT THE WHOLE INCIDENT.

"ANOTHER DAY—

ALL THE MAIDS ARE BUSY, BUT I MUST HAVE FRESH BUTTER MADE FOR MY KRISHNA. HMM, I WILL CHURN IT MYSELF.

"SHE WAS BUSY SINGING AND WORKING.

"KRISHNA HEARD HIS MOTHER SINGING MELODIOUSLY AND CLIMBED ONTO HER LAP.

"YASHODA WAS ENGROSSED IN THE CHILDISH PRATTLE OF KRISHNA WHEN SUDDENLY—

OH! THE MILK MUST HAVE BOILED OVER!

"KRISHNA DID NOT LIKE THIS AT ALL. HE BROKE THE CHURNING POT IN ANGER. WITH TEARS IN HIS EYES AND A CONTAINER OF BUTTER IN HIS HAND, HE MARCHED OFF...

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"... TO A SAFE CORNER TO EAT THE STOLEN BUTTER IN PEACE.

"WHEN YASHODA CAME BACK—

THE POT IS BROKEN! IT MUST BE KRISHNA. JUST LET ME CATCH HOLD OF HIM.

"BY NOW KRISHNA'S HUNGER AND ANGER HAD BOTH GONE. SHE FOUND HIM STANDING ON AN UPTURNED MORTAR HAPPILY SHARING THE BUTTER WITH THE MONKEYS.

AS SOON AS HE SAW YASHODA KRISHNA RAN AWAY WITH HIS FRIENDS.

RUN! RUN! MA HAS A STICK IN HER HAND.

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"YASHODA WAS QUITE OUT OF BREATH BY THE TIME SHE MANAGED TO CATCH HOLD OF KRISHNA.

TODAY, I MUST PUNISH YOU. YOU ARE BECOMING NAUGHTIER EVERY DAY!

"SHE DRAGGED HIM BACK HOME.

I WILL BIND YOU UP TO THE SAME MORTAR.

AHH! HERE IS SOME ROPE! NOW AT LEAST I WILL KNOW WHERE YOU ARE.

WHY! THIS ROPE IS SHORT BY JUST TWO FINGERS. ROHINI! GET SOME ROPE!

OH DEAR! AGAIN THIS IS A LITTLE SHORT FOR TYING A KNOT.

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"THERE WAS A LOOK OF MISCHIEF ON KRISHNA'S TEAR-STAINED FACE, AS IF HE WAS AMUSED AT HER FINDING THE ROPE SHORT. BUT AT LAST SHE MANAGED TO TIE HIM UP FIRMLY.

NOW YOU WILL STAY HERE TILL I DECIDE TO FREE YOU.

"BUT SHE WAS MISTAKEN. AS SOON AS HER BACK WAS TURNED—

I'LL FIND SOMEONE TO UNTIE ME.

"SLOWLY DRAGGING THE HEAVY MORTAR WITH HIM, HE TRUDGED ON TOWARDS THE BANK OF THE RIVER.

"ON HIS WAY WERE TWO YAMALARJUNA * TREES. KRISHNA MANAGED TO GO IN BETWEEN, BUT THE MORTAR GOT STUCK.

"WHEN KRISHNA TUGGED AT THE ROPE TO PULL HIMSELF FREE, BOTH THE TREES WERE UPROOTED...

* TWIN TREES OF THE GENUS, TERMINALIA

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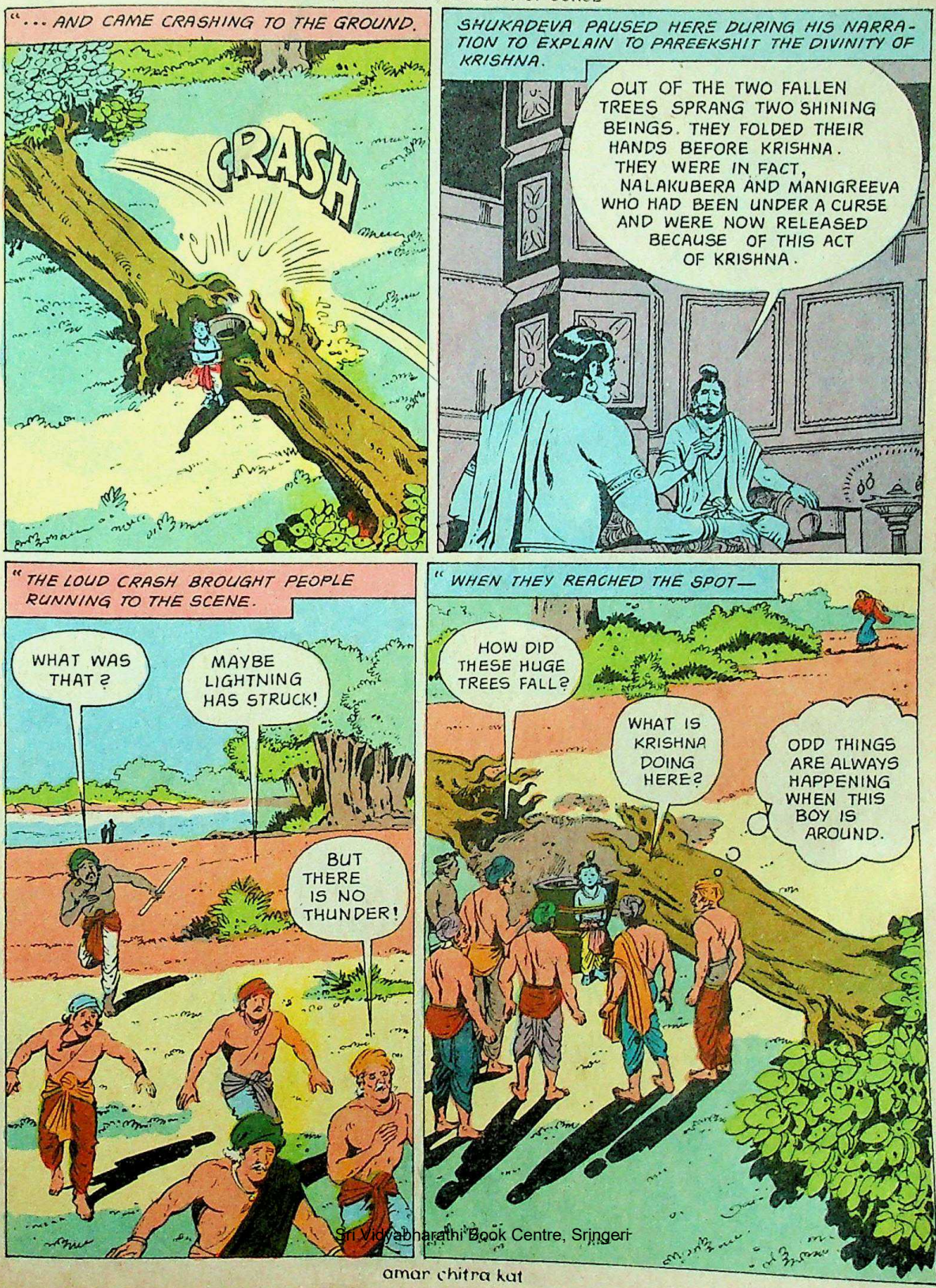

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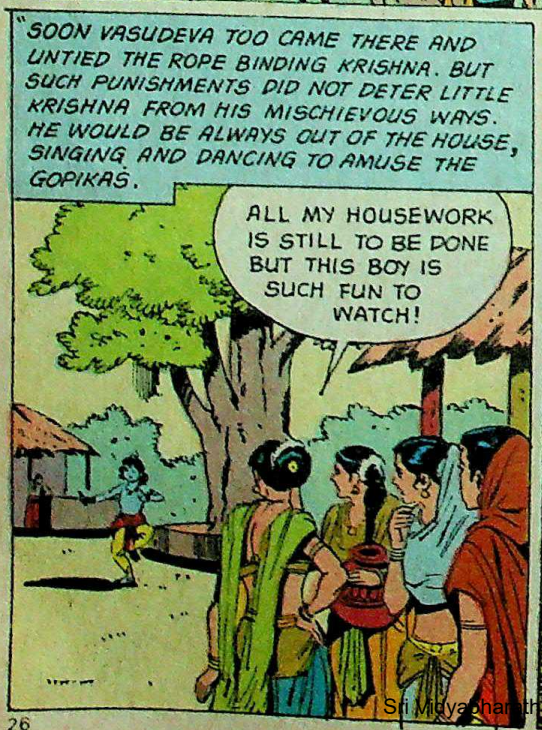

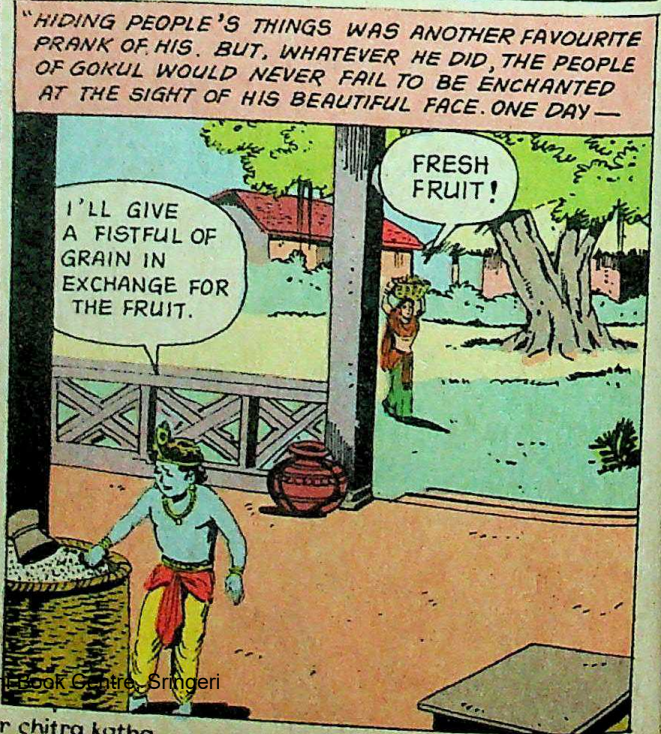

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"BUT BY THE TIME KRISHNA RAN OUT. ALL THE GRAIN FELL THROUGH HIS TINY FINGERS.

OH! WHERE DID IT ALL GO?

NEVER MIND! HERE, HOLD THIS PROPERLY.

"AS KRISHNA RAN AWAY HAPPILY WITH HIS BOOTY—

WHAT IS THIS? MY BASKET IS FILLED WITH GEMS! WHAT A MIRACLE!

"THE OLDER HE GREW, THE MORE TIME KRISHNA SPENT ON THE RIVER BANK, FROLICKING WITH HIS FRIENDS.

KRISHNA! BALARAMA! COME HOME QUICKLY. YOU HAVE NOT EATEN SINCE MORNING.

I CAN HARDLY RECOGNIZE YOU UNDER ALL THAT MUD! GO AND HAVE A BATH. SEE HOW CLEAN YOUR FRIENDS ARE!

"WHILE YASHODA WAS BUSY TRYING TO CONTROL KRISHNA'S LITTLE PRANKS, NANDA AND HIS ADVISERS WERE DISCUSSING A MORE SERIOUS MATTER. UPANANDA, A WISE AND ELDERLY MAN, SAID—

SUCH CALAMITIES HAVE BEGUN TO HAPPEN IN OUR QUIET GOKUL. I FEEL IT IS TIME TO LEAVE THIS PLACE FOR THE WELFARE OF OUR YOUNG ONES.

SEE THAT LITTLE DARLING OF NANDA. WHAT MIRACULOUS ESCAPES HE HAS HAD. FIRST THAT WICKED POOTANA, THEN THE CART FALLING ON HIM, THAT HORRIBLE WHIRLWIND PICKING HIM UP AND DASHING HIM DOWN. AND THOSE TWO TREES FALLING! THANK GOD NO ONE WAS INJURED.

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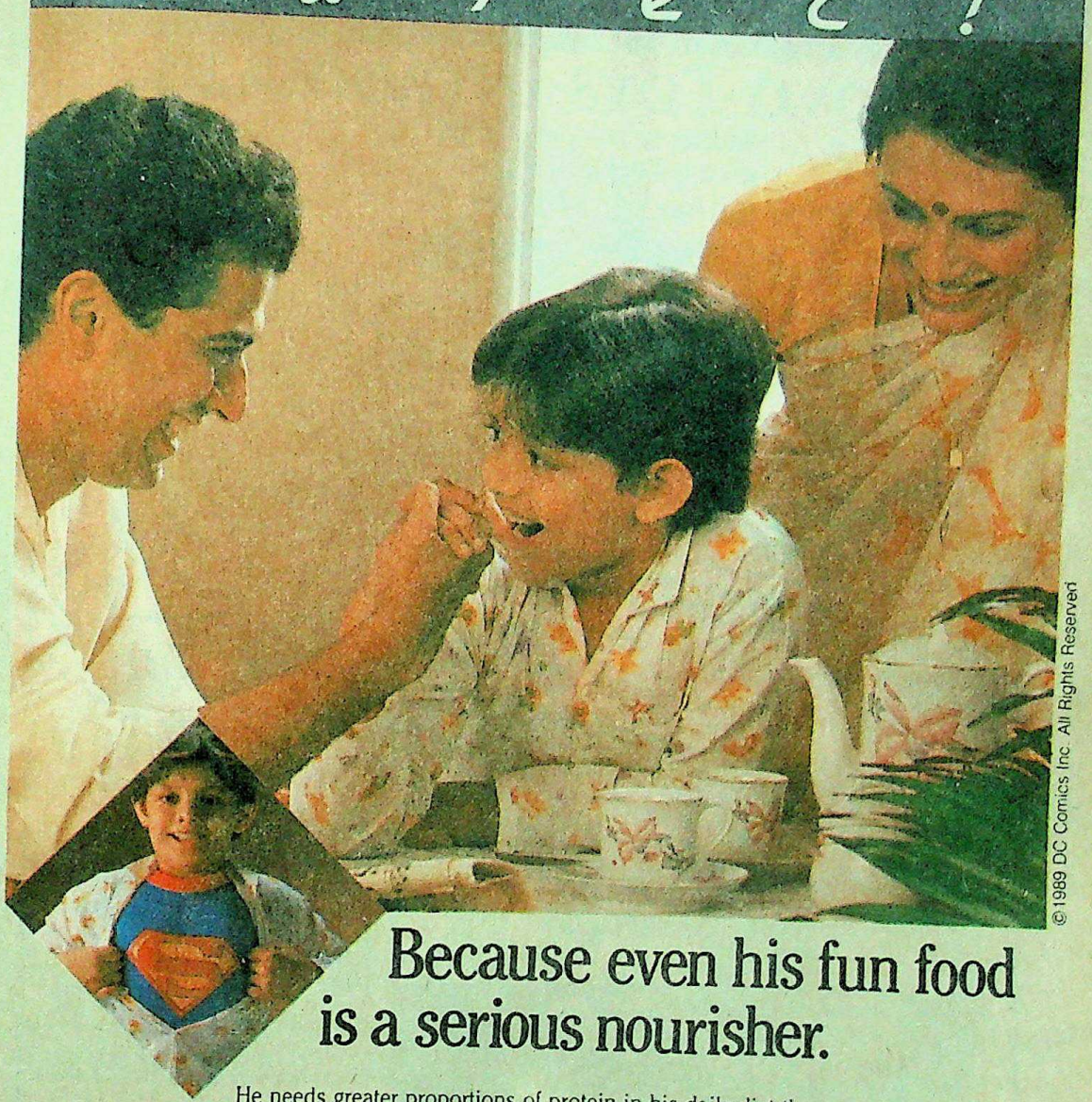

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Because even his fun food is a serious nourisher.

He needs greater proportions of protein in his daily diet than an adult. And this intake is starkly reflected in his health and vigour. Unfortunately, kids may not share adult tastes in food. They seem to fancy fun foods instead. But more often than not, fun foods are junk foods. What he really deserves is a tempting fun food that's also a serious nourisher.

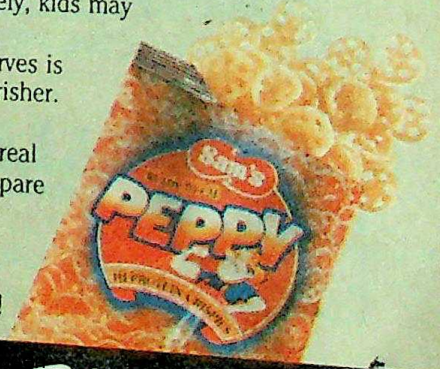
Like Peppy ready-to-eat Crispies.

The fun food that's generously enriched with real protein. A whopping 8.0% to be precise! Compare its crispy goodness and see for yourself! Besides, once a kid bites into it he'll always long for more!

Go on. Let him bite into its nourishing fun!

FOOD ITEM	PROTEIN (Gms.)
Milk	3.3
Icecream	4.0
Apples	0.3
Choc. Biscuits	6.2
Potato Chips	4.0
Fruit Cake	5.0
Cornflakes	6.5
PEPPY	8.0

Figures are based on 100 gm portions.
Source: Reader's Digest Family Medical Adviser



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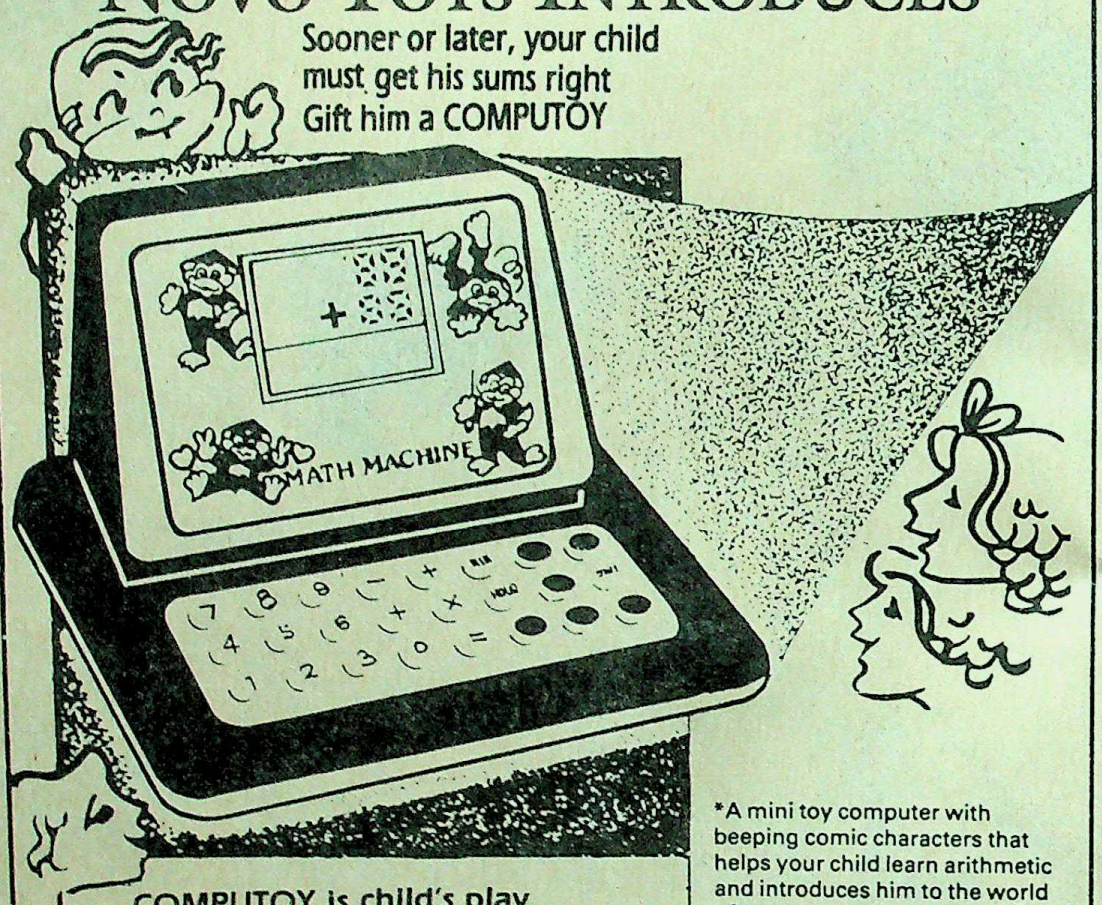

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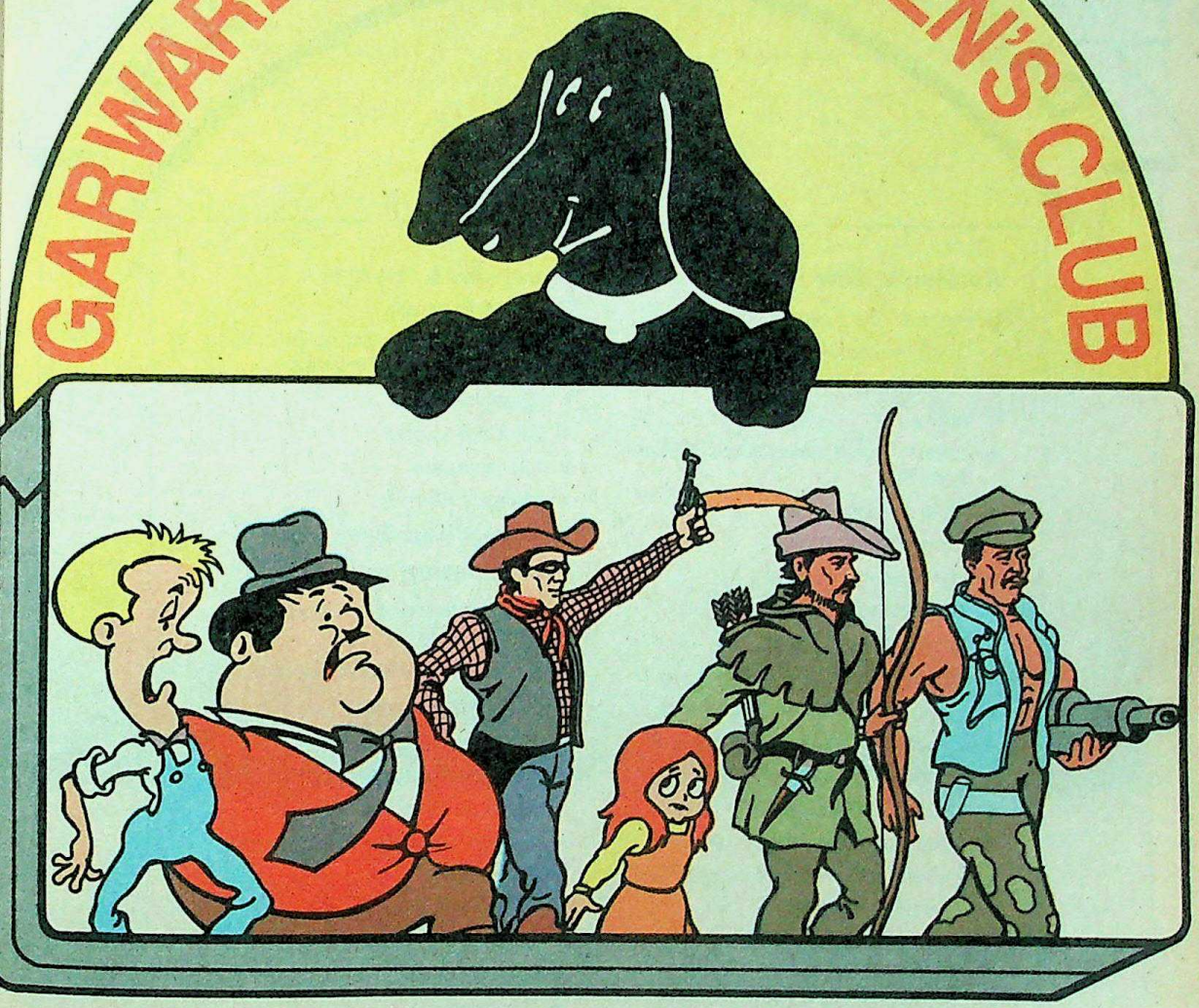

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KRISHNA: THE SUBDUER OF KALIYA

SHUKADEVA, THE SON OF SAGE VYASA, WAS TELLING PAREEKSHIT, THE GRANDSON OF ARJUNA, THE STORY OF KRISHNA.

YOU MEAN ALL THE PEOPLE OF GOKUL LEFT THE PLACE TOGETHER?

YES, THE ELDERS OF THE CLAN THOUGHT IT WAS WISER TO LEAVE GOKUL. KRISHNA, THE BELOVED SON OF THEIR LEADER, HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN TOO MANY MISHAPS IN GOKUL. SO THEY ALL WENT TO VRINDAVAN TO SETTLE THERE.

"THEY FOUND VRINDAVAN TO BE A BEAUTEOUS SPOT IN LUSH SURROUNDINGS. MOUNT GOVARDHAN LOOMED AT A DISTANCE, AND THE RIVER YAMUNA, WITH ITS GRASSY BANKS, FLOWED GENTLY PAST.

"THE NEW SETTLERS FIRST BUILT SHEDS FOR THE CATTLE...

"...AND SOON SETTLED DOWN AFTER BUILDING THEIR OWN HOMES.

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"BALARAMA AND KRISHNA WERE DELIGHTED TO BE IN VRINDAVAN. IN THEIR SWEET VOICES THEY WOULD OFTEN PRAISE THEIR NEW PLACE.

"THEY WISHED TO EXPLORE THE FOREST AROUND.

MAY I ALSO GO TO GRAZE THE COWS?

NO! YOU ARE TOO SMALL TO GO TO THE FOREST.

BUT I SO MUCH WISH TO GO, MA!

ALL RIGHT. YOU AND BALARAMA MAY TAKE THE CALVES TO GRAZE. BUT DON'T GO TOO FAR!

"WHILE THE CALVES GRAZED THE TENDER GRASS CONTENTEDLY, THE BOYS WOULD BE ENGROSSED IN GAMES.

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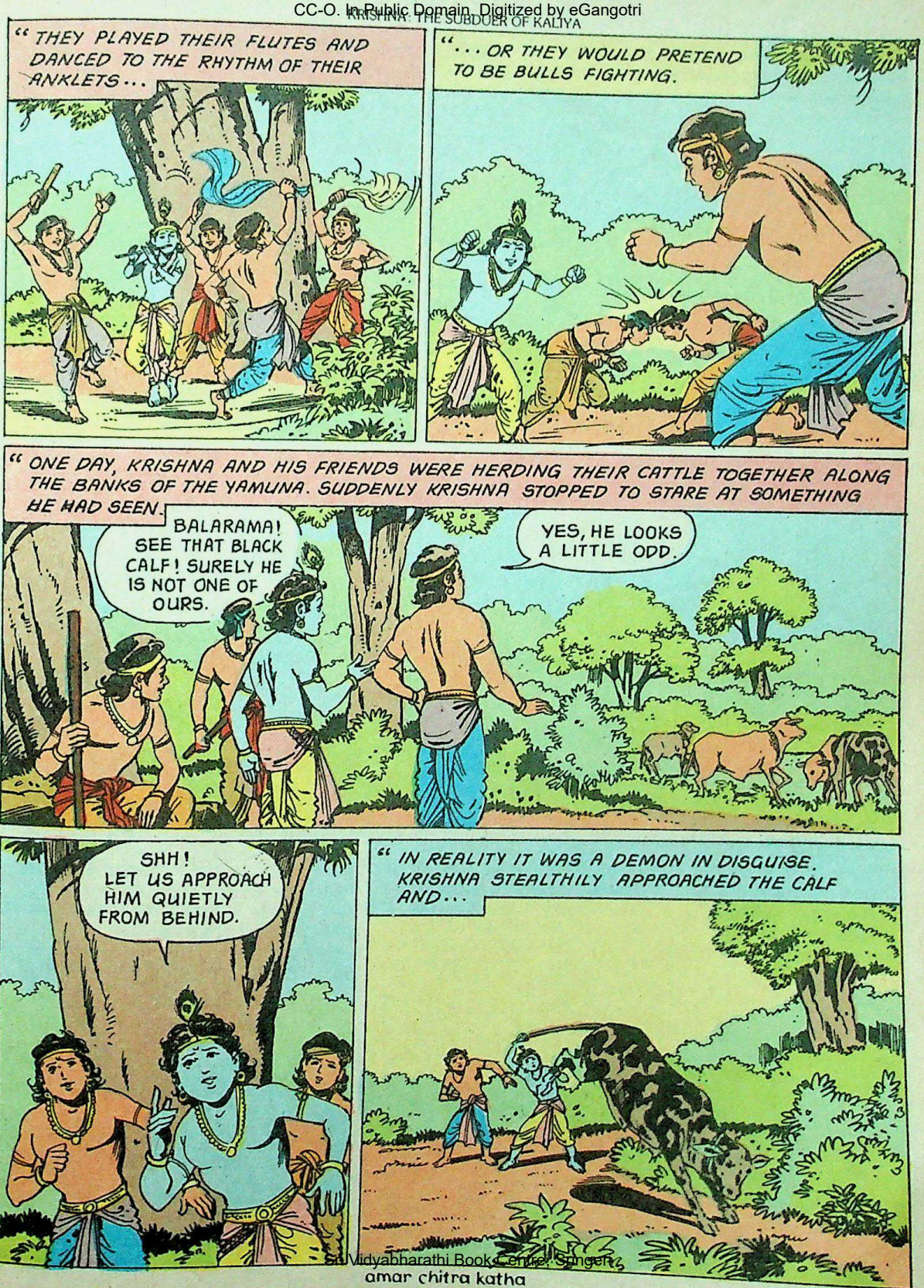

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"...HOLDING HIS HIND LEGS FIRMLY IN ONE HAND, TWIRLED HIM AROUND.

"THEN WITH A TWIST OF HIS WRIST HE THREW THE DEMON CALF ON TO THE TOP OF A WOOD-APPLE TREE.

"THE DEMON REGAINED HIS TRUE FORM AS HE FELL TO HIS DEATH, CRUSHING A NUMBER OF TREES UNDER HIS WEIGHT.

"KRISHNA'S OTHER COMPANIONS BECAME EXCITED AS THEY SAW IT.

WELL DONE!

AHA! WHAT A FEAT!

"WHEN THEY WERE A LITTLE OLDER, KRISHNA AND BALARAMA WERE ALLOWED TO TAKE THE OLDER CATTLE TO THE FOREST TO GRAZE.

"THEY WOULD CARRY THEIR MORNING MEAL WITH THEM, AND ROAM ALL DAY, FROM FOREST TO FOREST, WITH THEIR HERD. ONE DAY—

COME, LET US DRIVE THE COWS TOWARDS THE LAKE. THEY MUST BE THIRSTY NOW.

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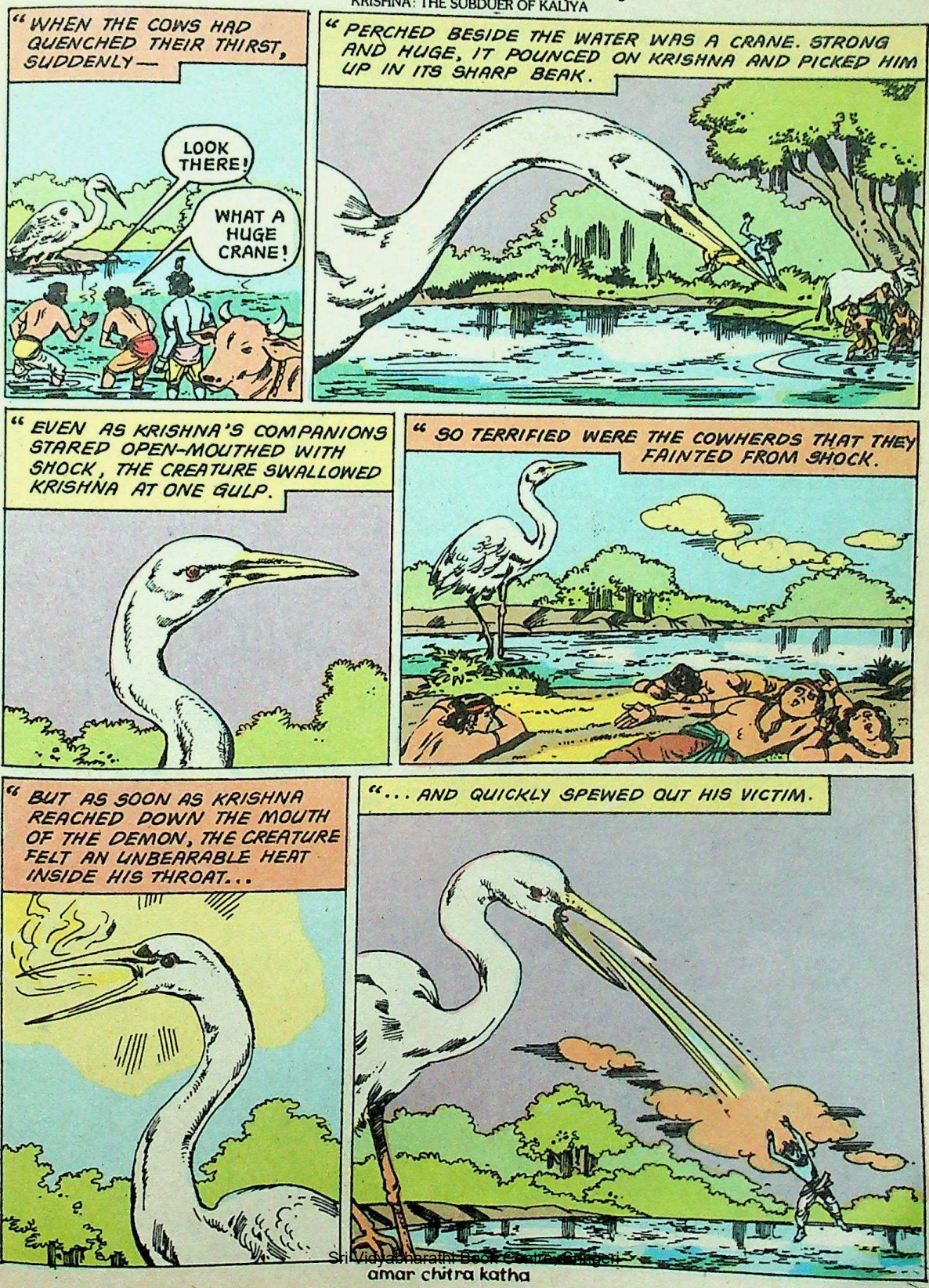

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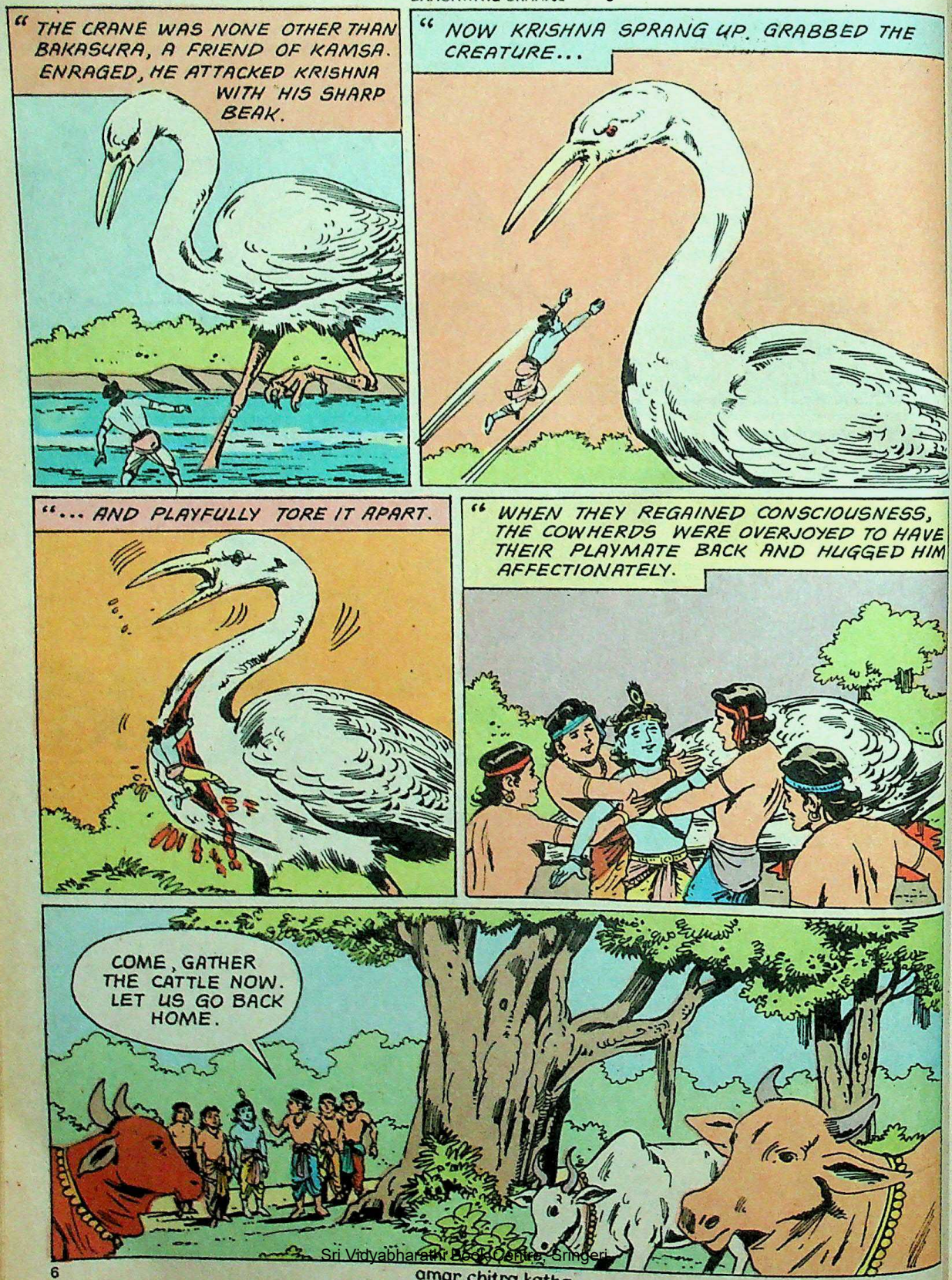

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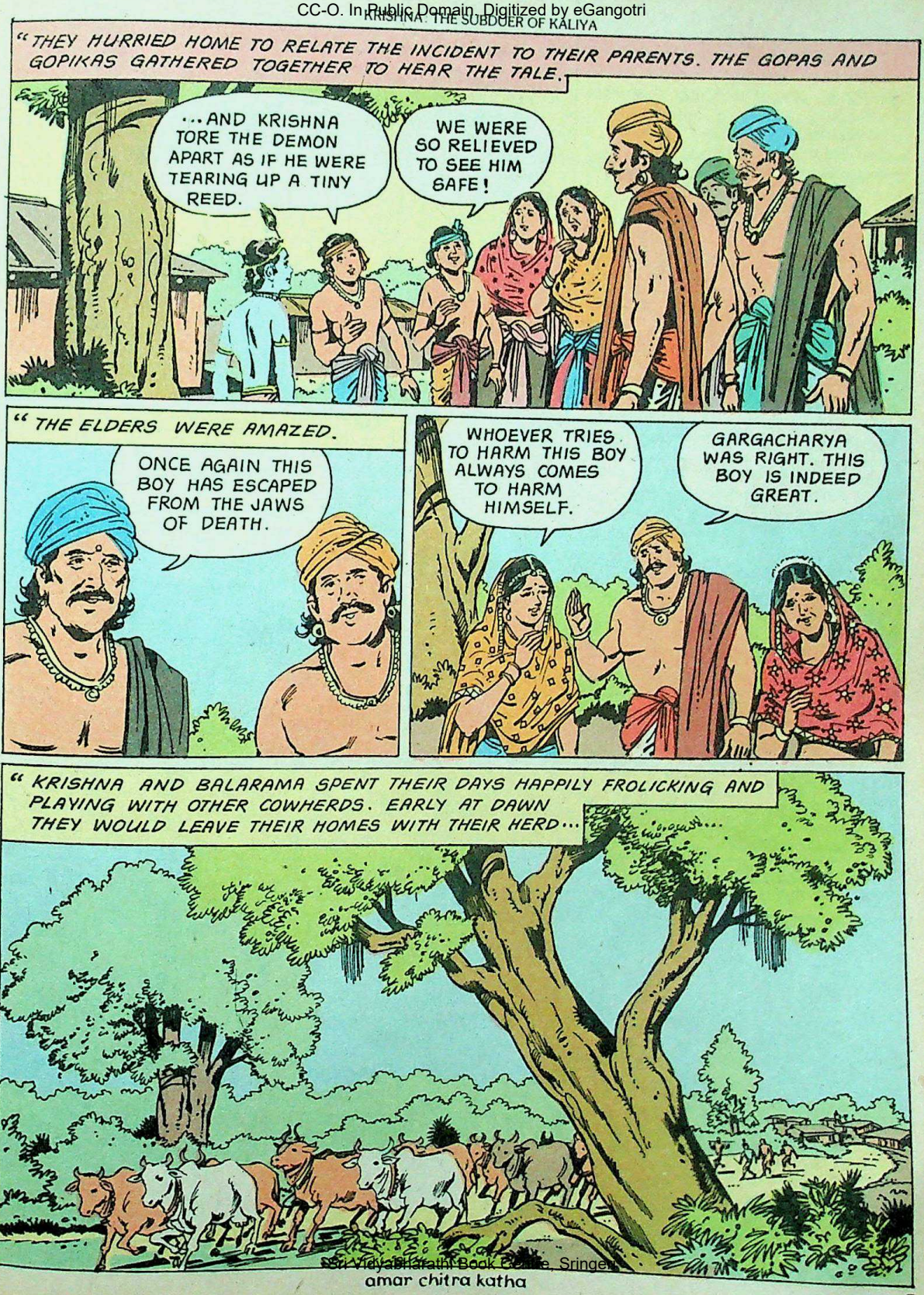

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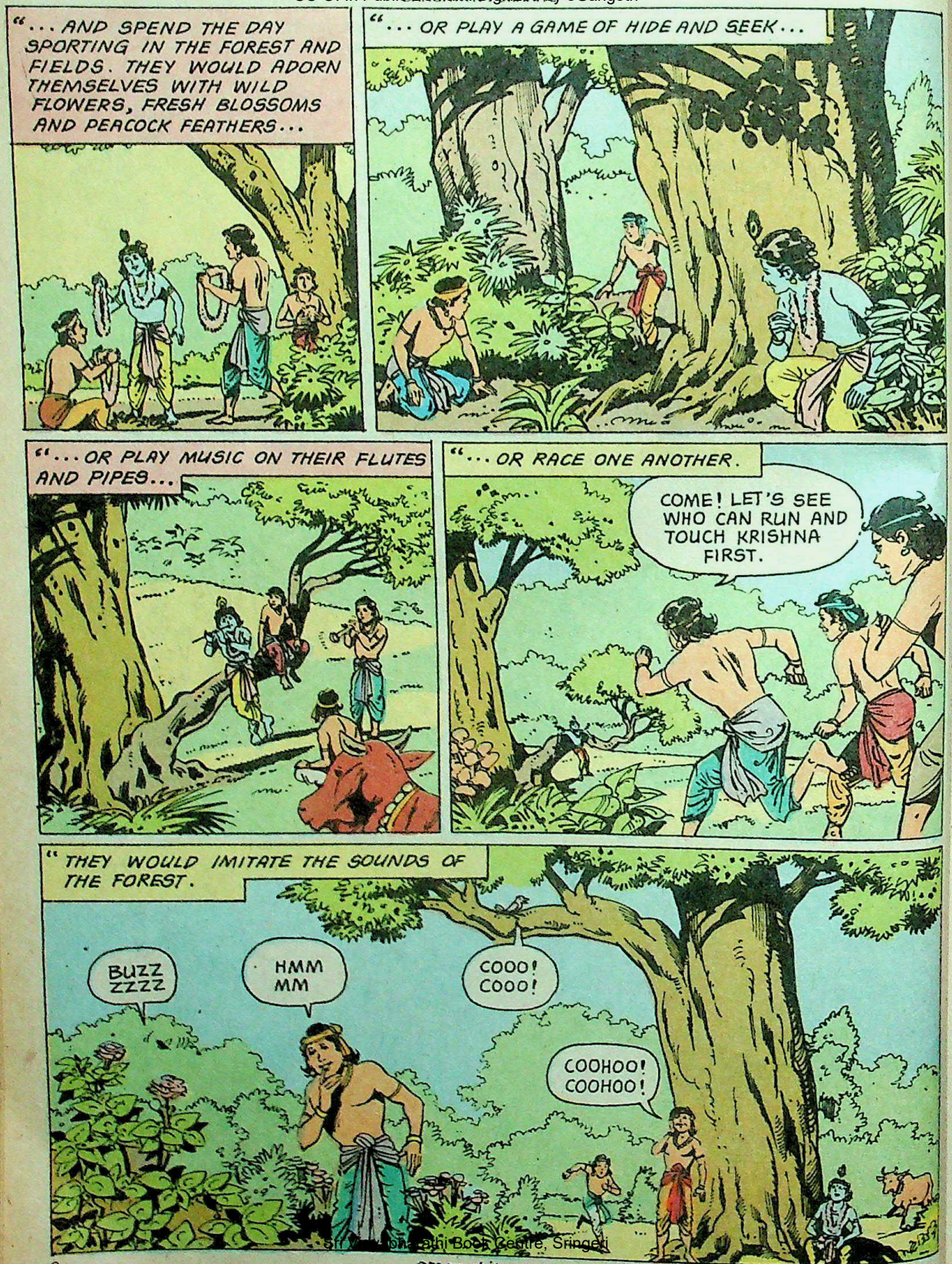

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"...OR IMITATE THE BIRDS' WALK AND DANCE.

SEE! I AM AS GRACEFUL AS A SWAN.

I AM A PEACOCK. SEE MY DANCE.

"WITH THE MONKEYS OF THE JUNGLE, THEY WOULD SCAMPER UP THE TREES AND LEAP FROM ONE BRANCH TO ANOTHER.

"ONE DAY, WHEN THE COWHERDS WERE PLAYING THEIR SIMPLE GAMES, AGHASURA, A DREADFUL DEMON SAW THEM.

HOW HAPPILY THEY ARE PLAYING HERE, AS IF THEY ARE JUST INNOCENT CHILDREN.

BUT AMONG THEM IS THAT BOY KRISHNA WHO KILLED MY SISTER POOTANA AND MY BROTHER BAKASURA.

TODAY I WILL KILL HIM AND ALL HIS FRIENDS.

"AGHASURA, WHO WAS STRONG ENOUGH TO TERRIFY EVEN THE DEVAS, ASSUMED THE FORM OF AN ENORMOUS SERPENT.

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"LIKE A HUGE MOUNTAIN HE SPREAD HIMSELF KEEPING HIS CAVE-LIKE MOUTH OPEN. HIS LOWER LIP RESTED ON EARTH, WHILE THE UPPER REACHED UP TO THE CLOUDS. LIKE A RED RIBBON OF A ROAD, HIS TONGUE EMERGED FROM WITHIN.

"WHEN THE COWHERDS SAW THE CREATURE IN THEIR PATH, THEY WERE AMAZED.

SEE THIS ODD CREATURE. IT LOOKS LIKE A PYTHON WAITING TO SWALLOW US!

HA! HA! SEE HOW THE RAYS OF THE SUN ARE TURNING THE CLOUDS PINK.

THEY LOOK LIKE HIS UPPER JAW.

"INNOCENTLY THEY SAID—

AND THE SHADOW OF THOSE CLOUDS IS ALSO RED. THAT MUST BE HIS LOWER LIP.

SEE THIS LONG RED-HUED ROAD. IT LOOKS LIKE THE TONGUE OF A SERPENT!

HOW HOT THE WIND IS! THERE MUST BE A FOREST FIRE NEAR BY!

AND SUCH A STENCH TOO! SOME POOR CREATURES MUST HAVE BEEN BURNT IN THE FIRE!

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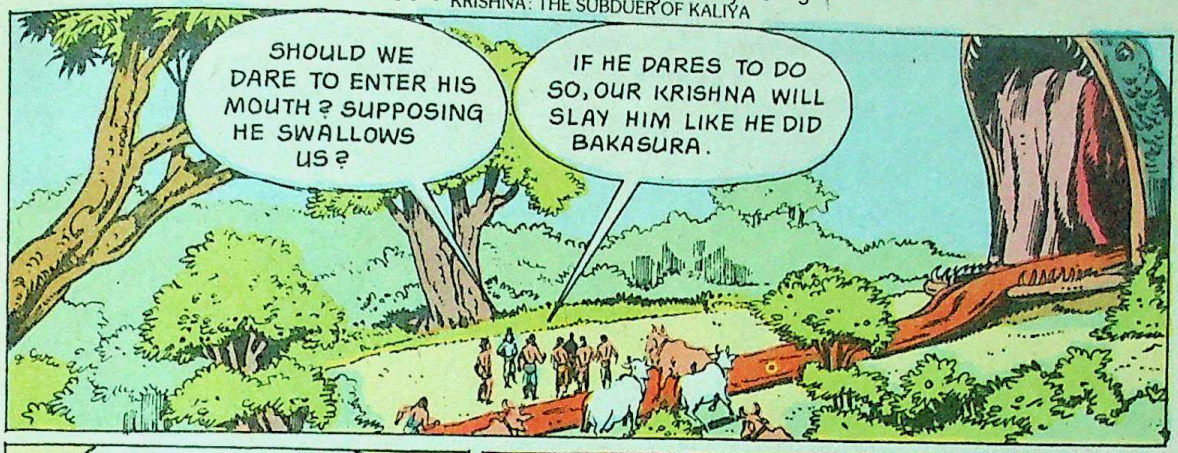

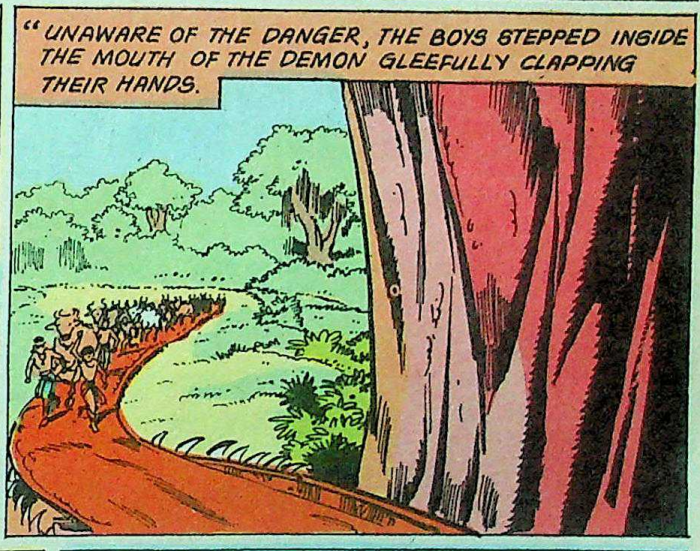

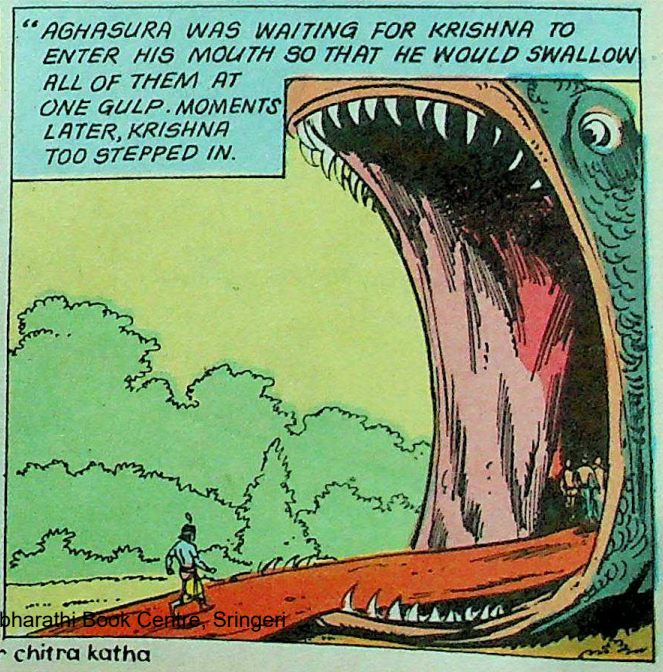

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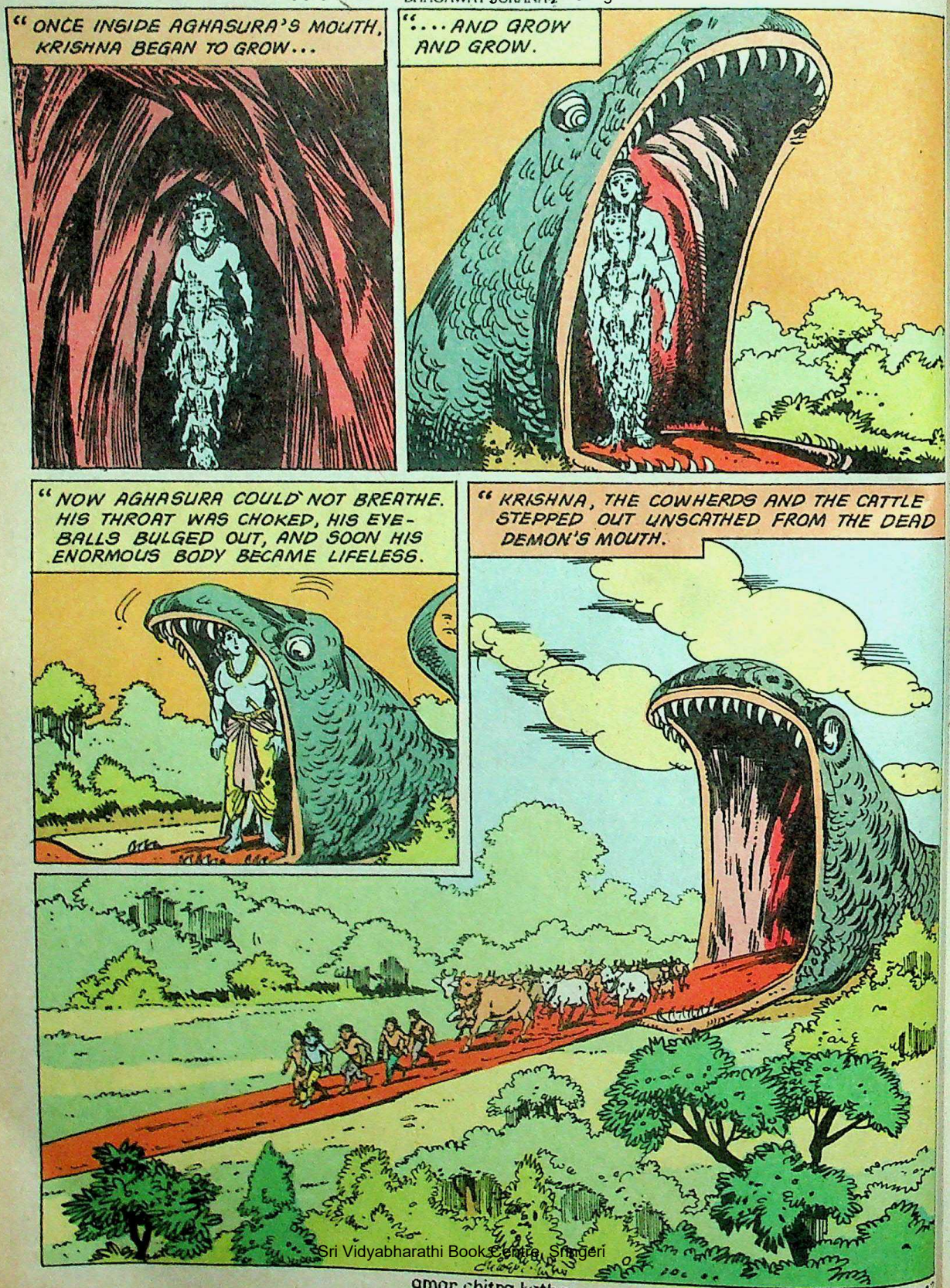

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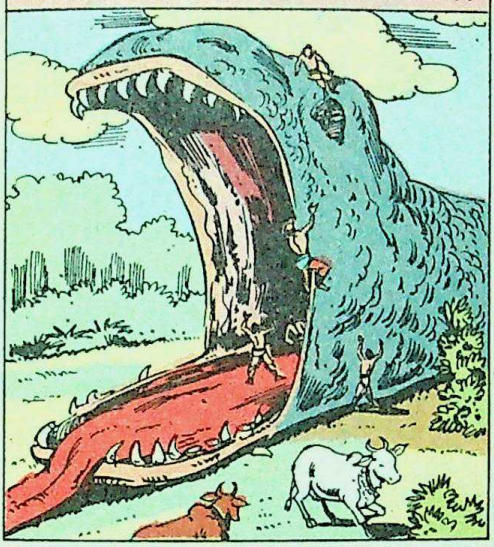
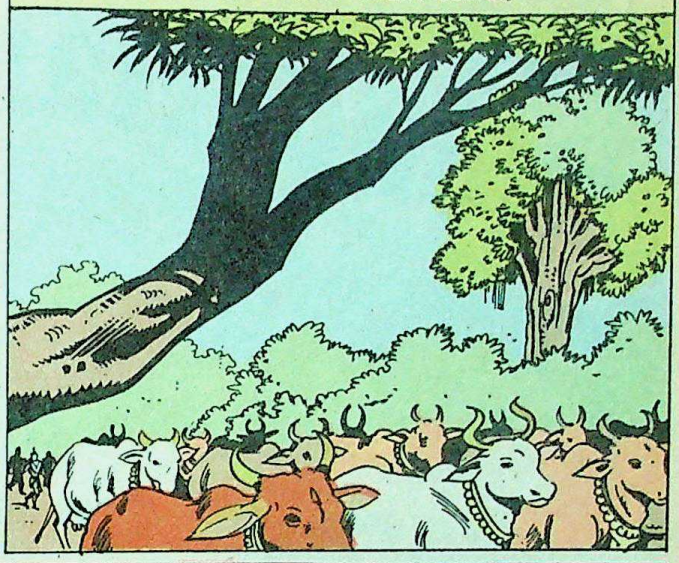
"AFTER SOME TIME, THE SKIN OF AGHASURA BECAME STIFF AND DRY AND IT BECAME A FAVOURITE PLACE FOR THE CHILDREN TO PLAY.



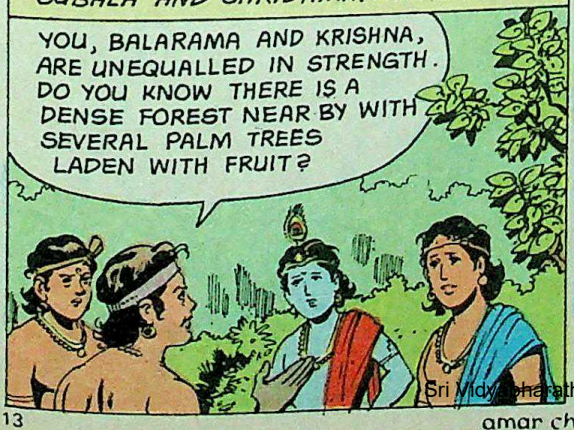
"WHEN KRISHNA AND BALARAMA WERE SIX, THEY WERE ALLOWED TO GO FURTHER FROM HOME, INTO THE DEEP FOREST WITH THEIR COWS.



"THE SCENTED FLOWERS, THE SPARKLING WATERS OF THE BEAUTIFUL LAKES, THE GALLOPING DEER AND THE SWEET SOUND OF BIRDSONG IN THE FORESTS OF VRINDAVAN NEVER FAILED TO DELIGHT KRISHNA. ONE DAY KRISHNA AND BALARAMA WERE RESTING AFTER PLAY.

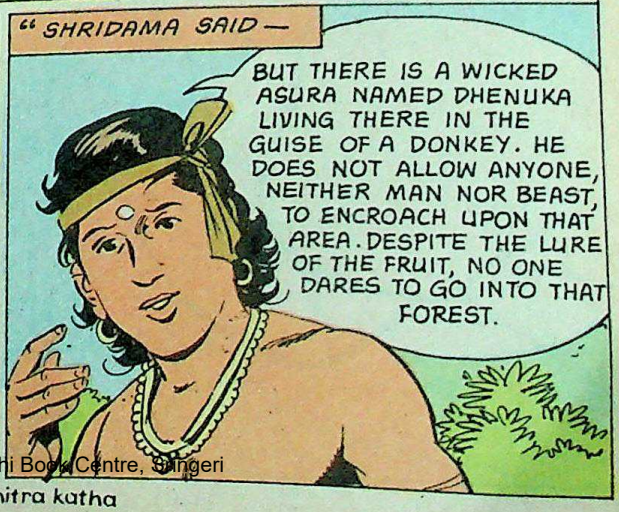
"AMONG THEIR COWHERD FRIENDS WERE SUBALA AND SHRIDAMA. THEY SAID —

YOU, BALARAMA AND KRISHNA, ARE UNEQUALLED IN STRENGTH. DO YOU KNOW THERE IS A DENSE FOREST NEAR BY WITH SEVERAL PALM TREES LADEN WITH FRUIT?



"SHRIDAMA SAID —

BUT THERE IS A WICKED ASURA NAMED DHENUKA LIVING THERE IN THE GUISE OF A DONKEY. HE DOES NOT ALLOW ANYONE, NEITHER MAN NOR BEAST, TO ENCROACH UPON THAT AREA. DESPITE THE LURE OF THE FRUIT, NO ONE DARES TO GO INTO THAT FOREST.



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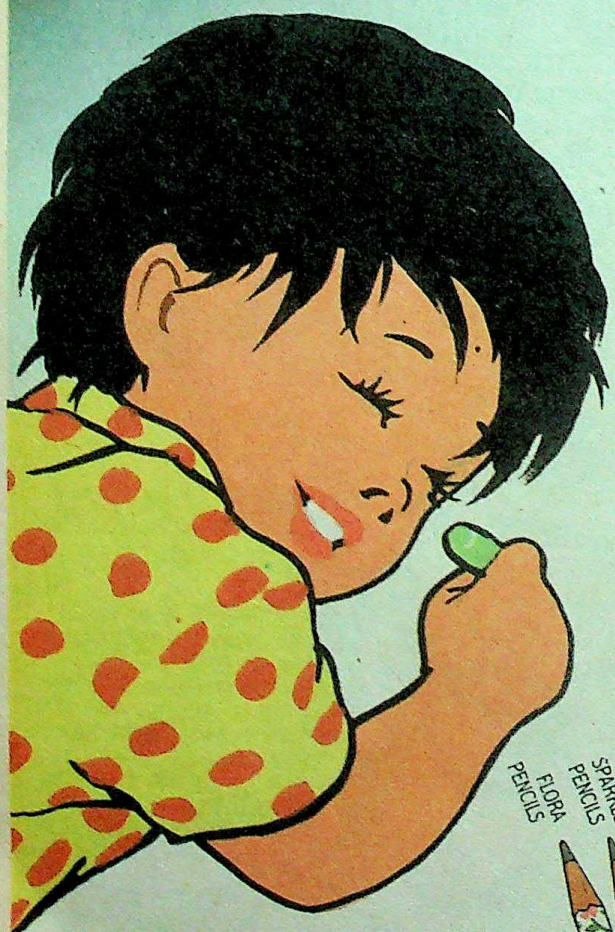

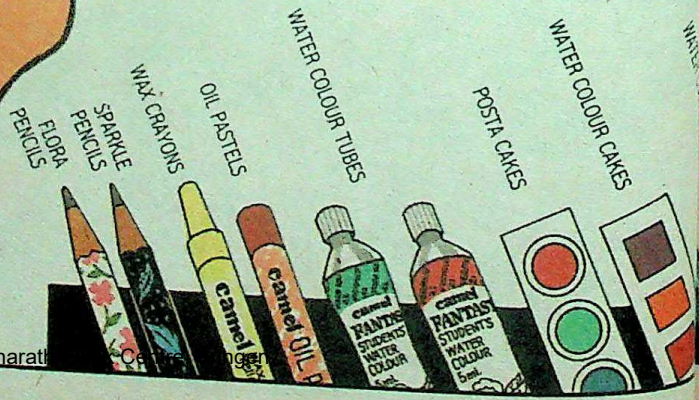

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"... AND TWIRLED HIM ROUND SO FAST THAT THE ASURA DIED.

"BALARAMA THEN FLUNG DHENUKASURA UP AND HE FELL ON THE TOP OF A PALM TREE.

"WITH A LOUD NOISE, THE TREE CRASHED TO THE GROUND, FELLING A NUMBER OF OTHER TREES TOO.

"KRISHNA AND BALARAMA RETURNED HOME HAPPY. FROM THAT DAY ON, PEOPLE OF VRINDAVAN VENTURED FEARLESSLY INTO THE FOREST TO EAT THE PALM FRUIT AND GRAZE THEIR CATTLE.

"BALARAMA AND KRISHNA WERE USUALLY INSEPARABLE. ONE DAY, HOWEVER, KRISHNA WENT WITH HIS OTHER FRIENDS TO THE BANKS OF THE YAMUNA, LEAVING BALARAMA BEHIND.

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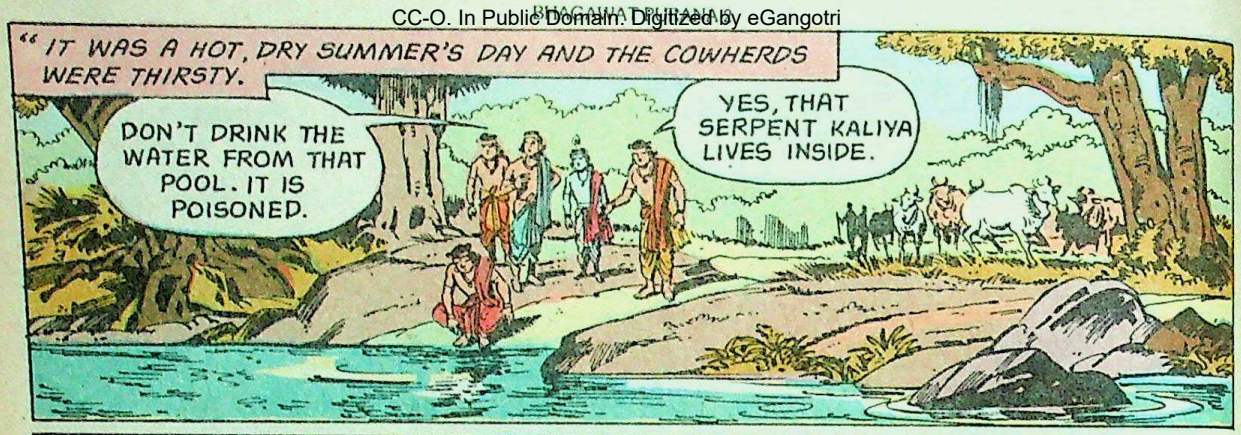

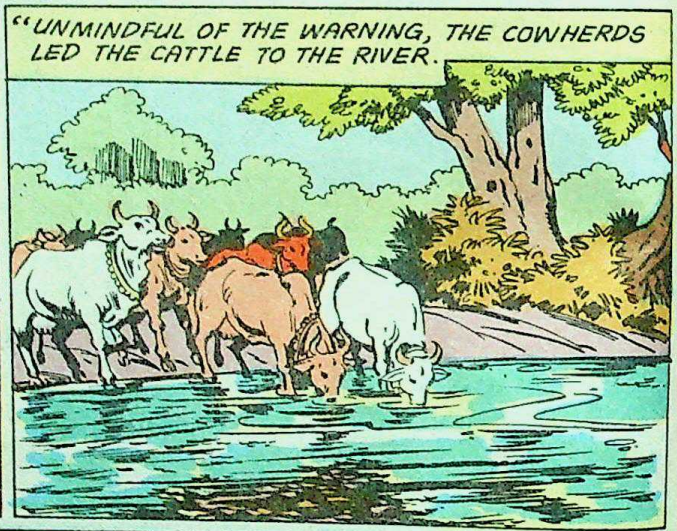

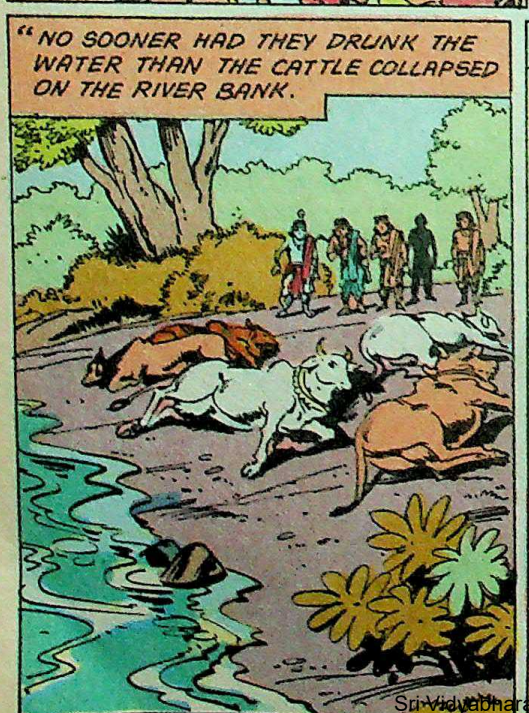

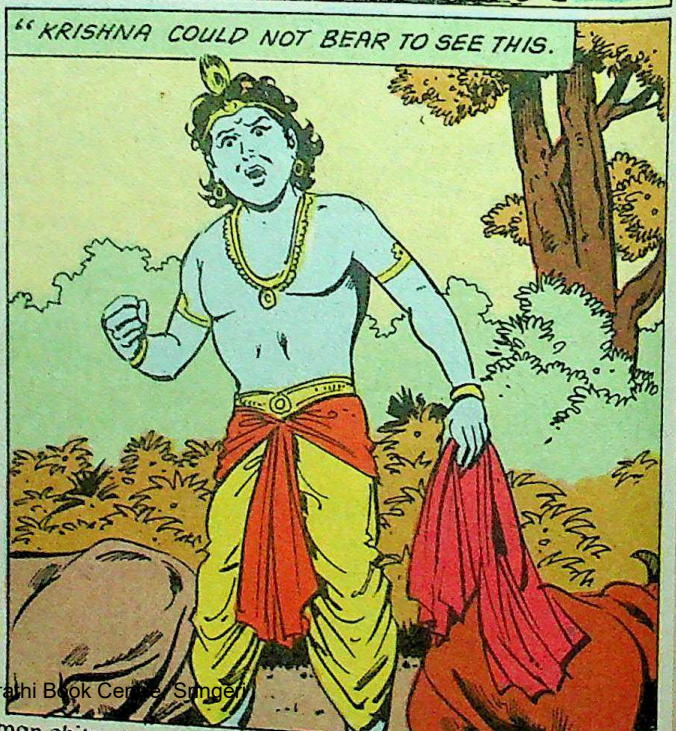

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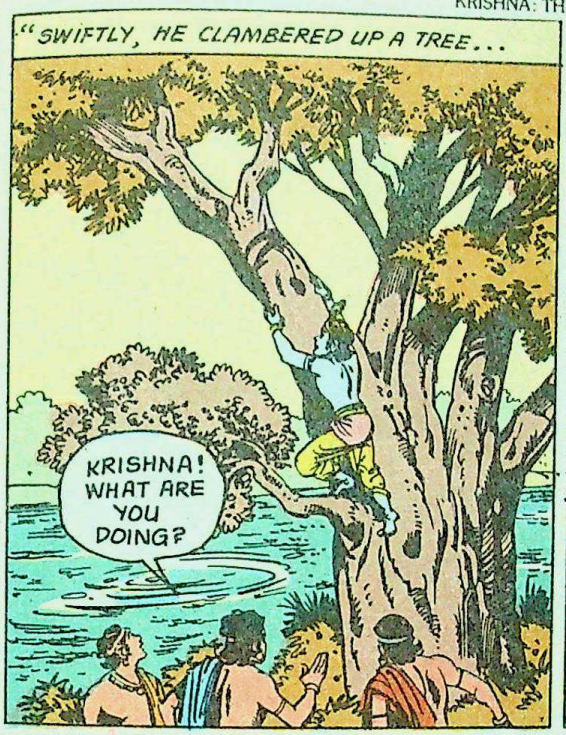

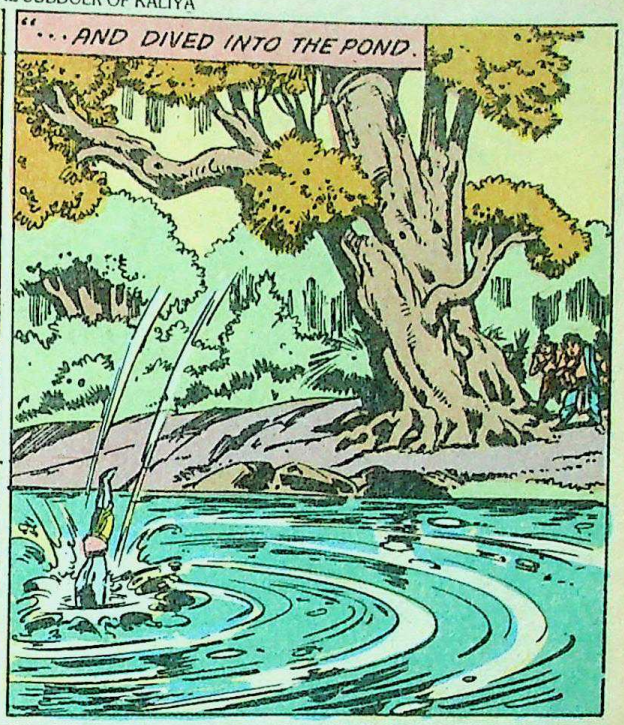

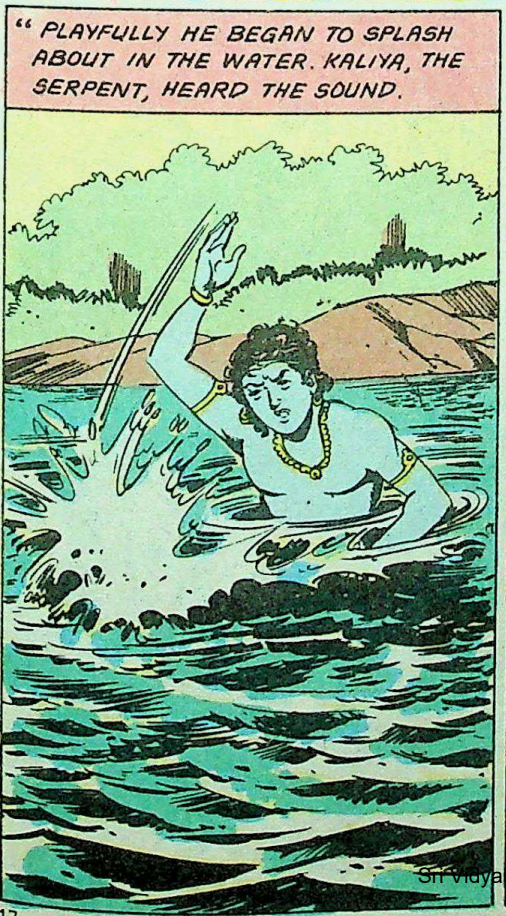

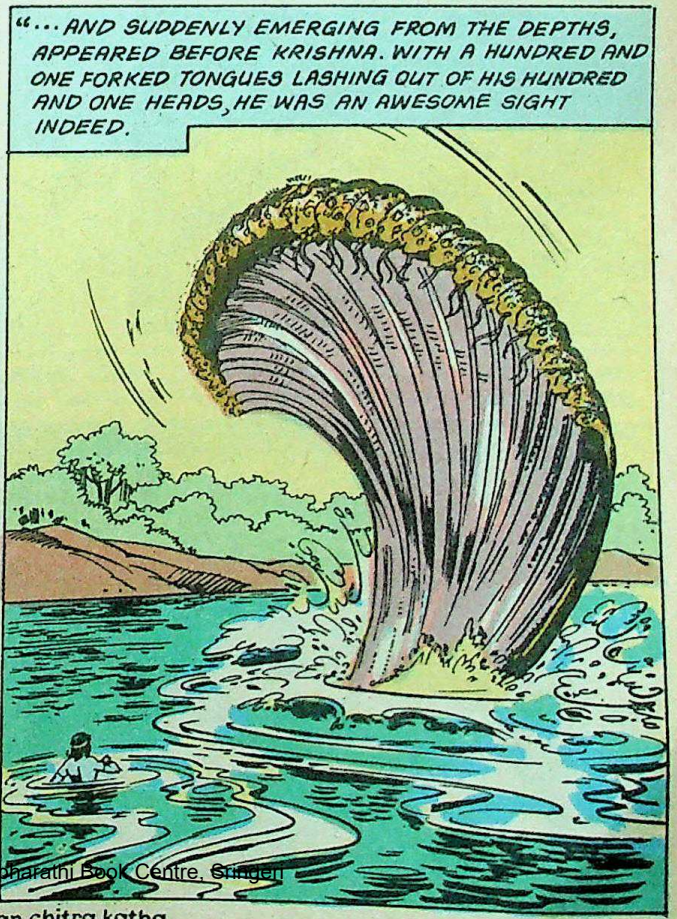

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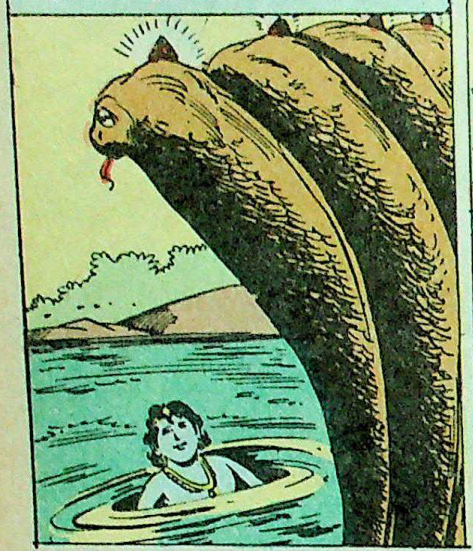
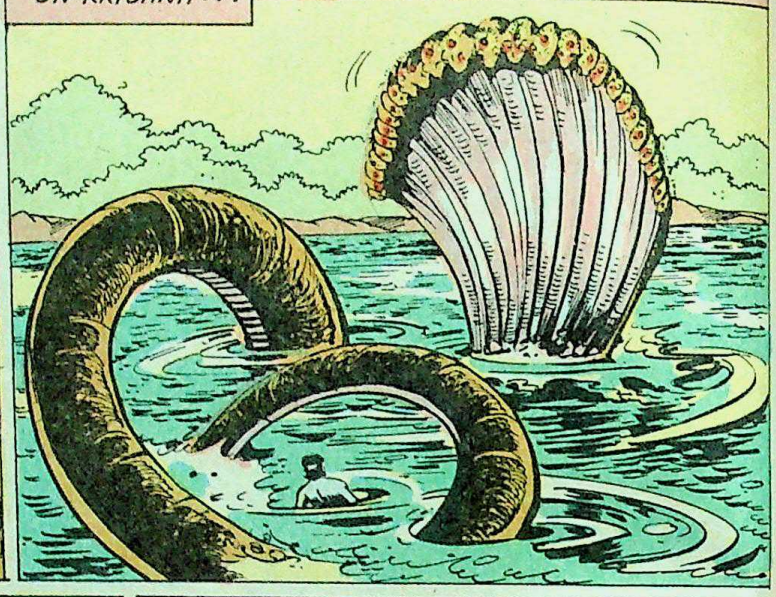
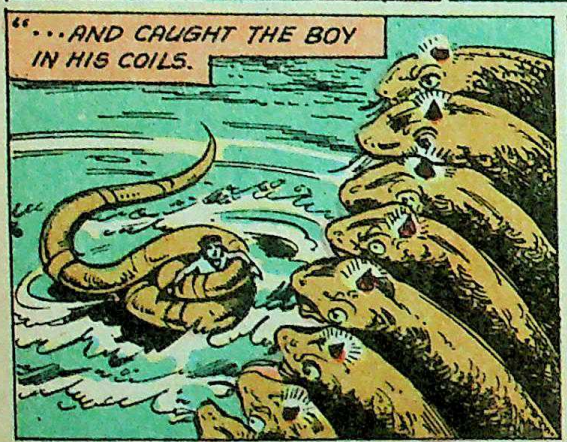
"BUT KRISHNA REMAINED CALM AND GAZED AT HIM WITH A GENTLE SMILE ON HIS LIPS.



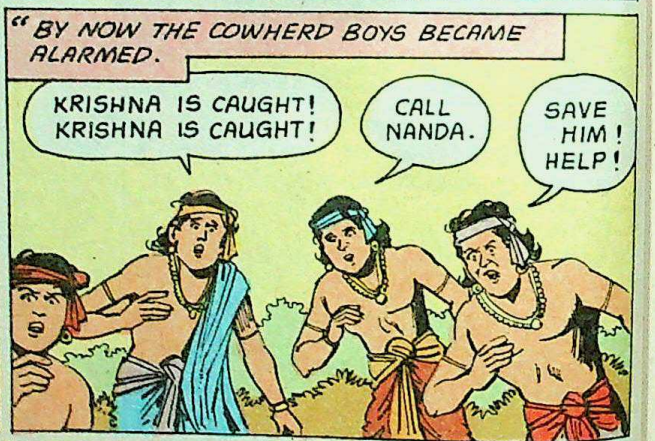
"THIS MADE KALIYA ALL THE MORE ANGRY. HE POUNCED ON KRISHNA . . .



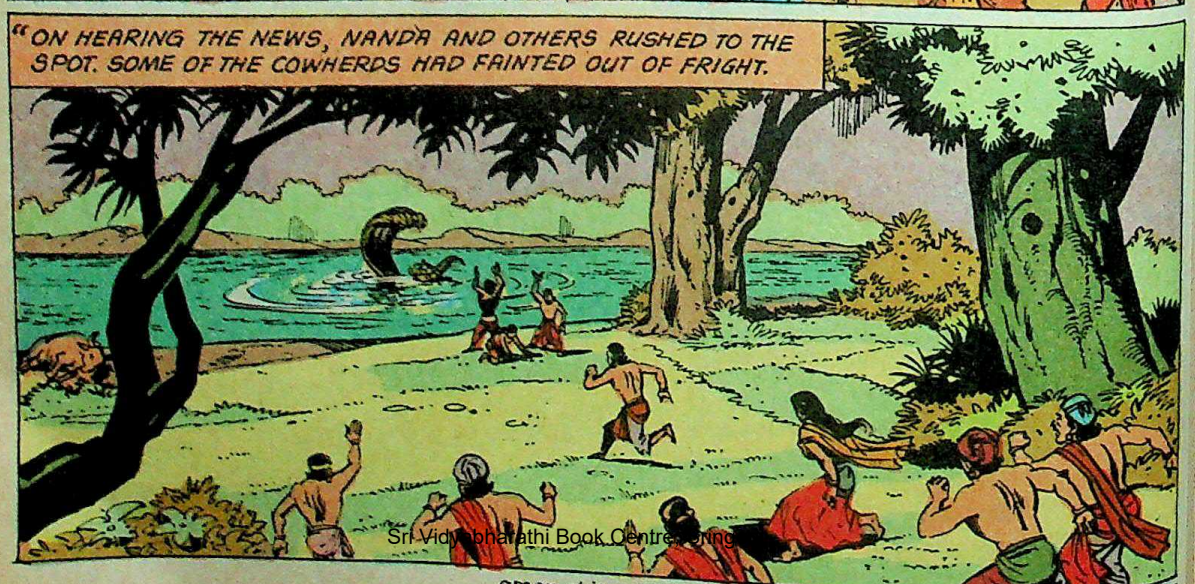
"...AND CAUGHT THE BOY IN HIS COILS.



"BY NOW THE COWHERD BOYS BECAME ALARMED.



"ON HEARING THE NEWS, NANDA AND OTHERS RUSHED TO THE SPOT. SOME OF THE COWHERDS HAD FAINTED OUT OF FRIGHT.



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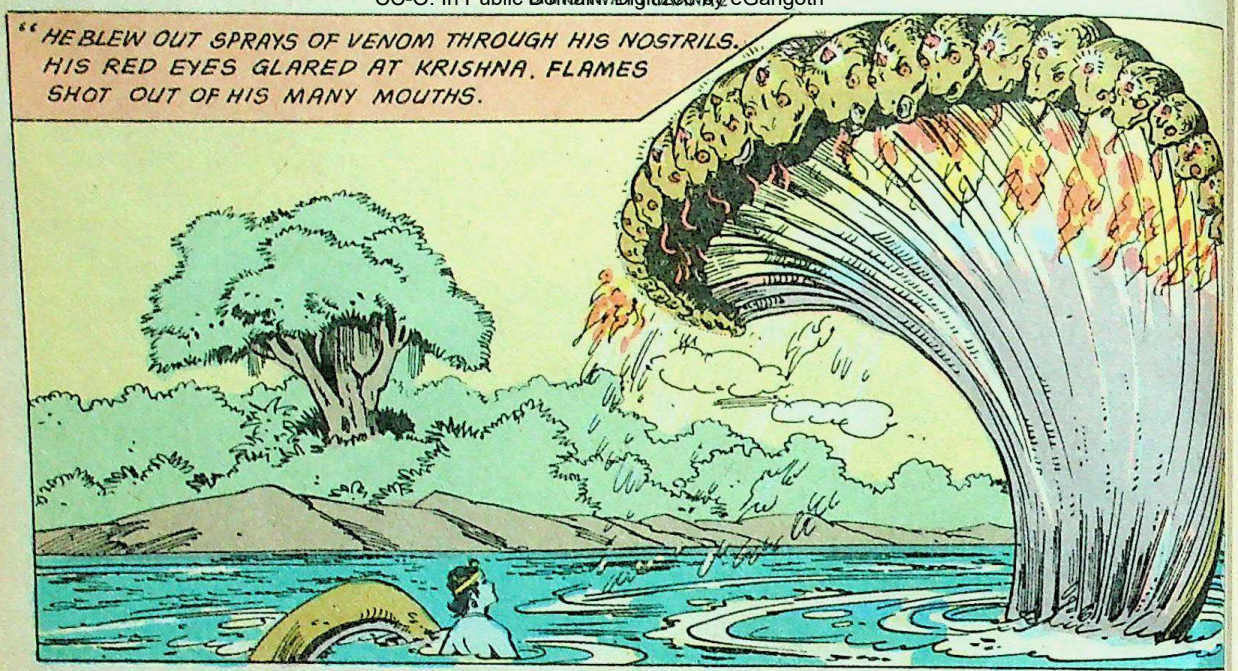

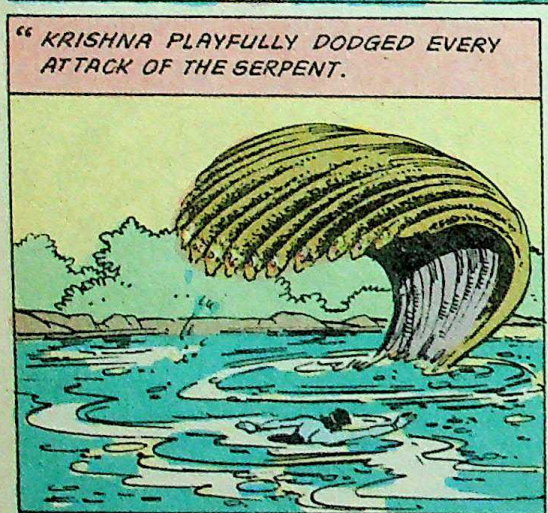

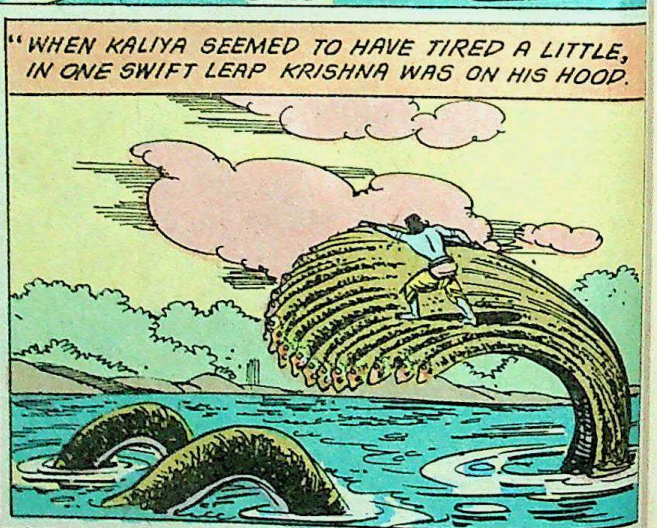

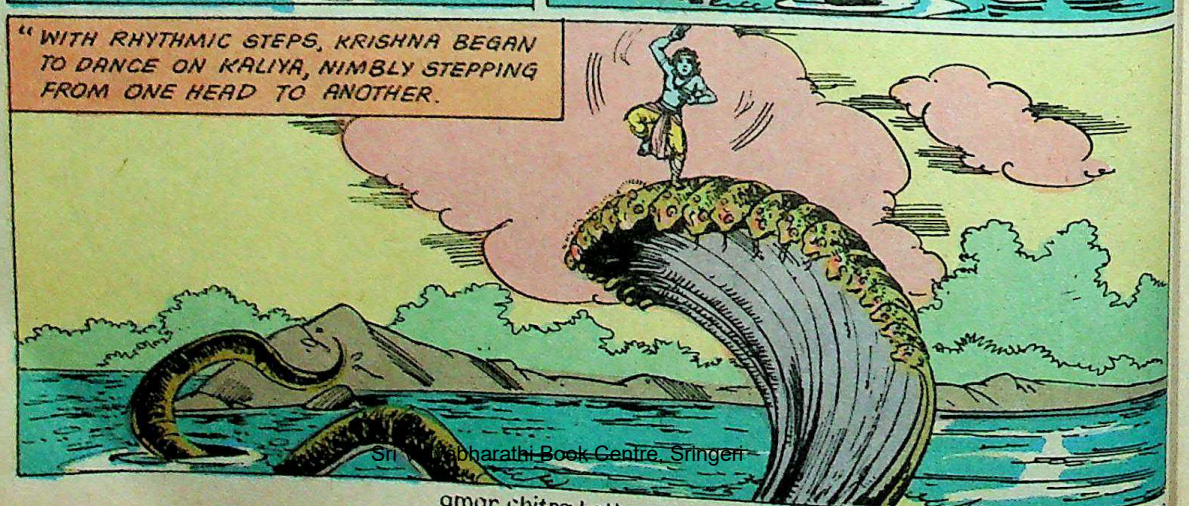

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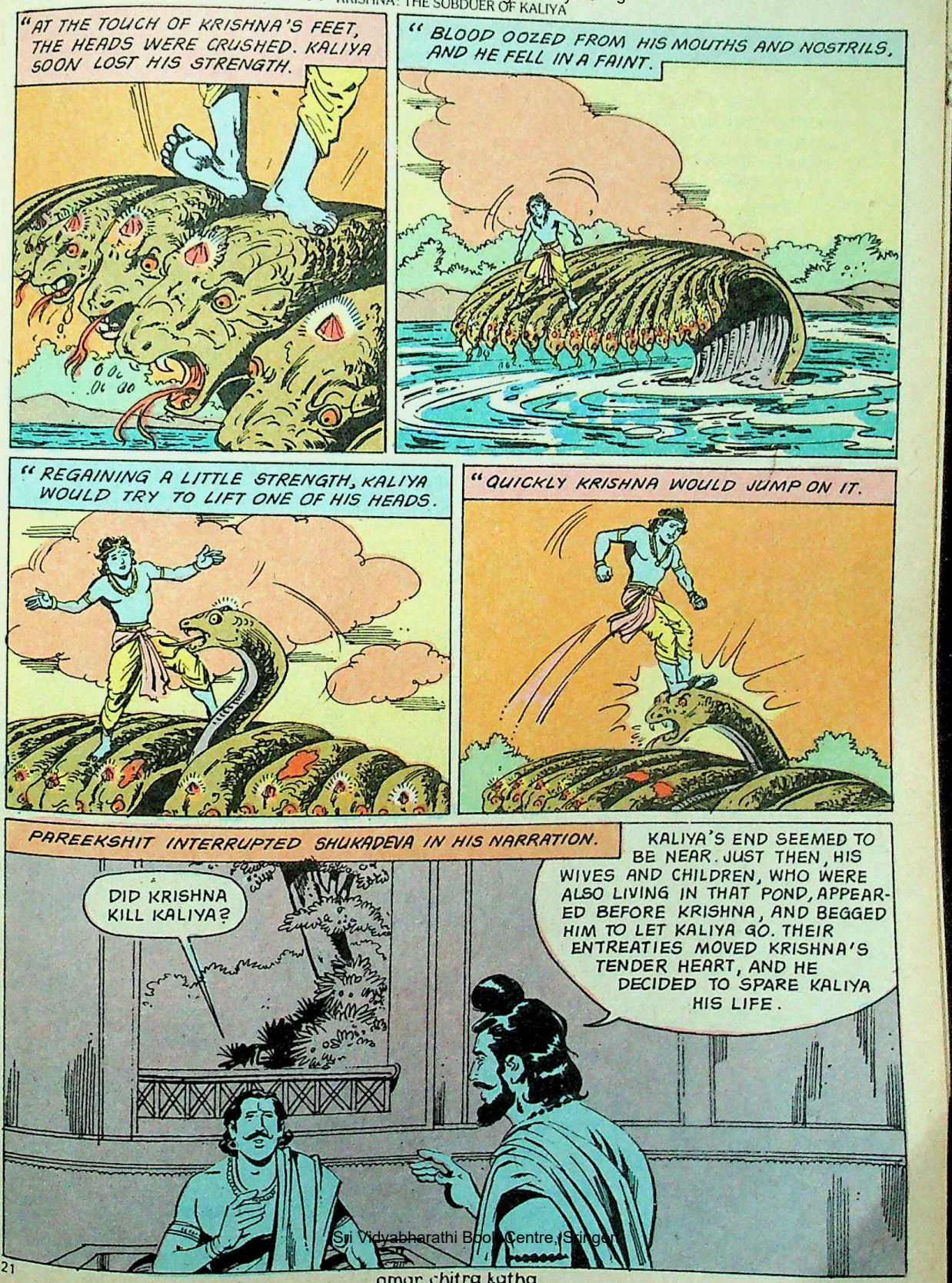

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"ADDRESSING KALIYA, KRISHNA SAID—

YOU MUST NOT STAY ANY LONGER IN THIS POOL. TAKE AWAY ALL YOUR KIN AND DEPART FOR THE HIGH SEAS.

"AS COMMANDED BY KRISHNA, KALIYA LEFT THE POOL AND WENT AWAY. THE WATER OF THE POOL BECAME MIRACULOUSLY PURE AND CLEAR.

"PEACE AND TRANQUILLITY RETURNED TO VRINDAVAN. EVEN IN THE HOT SUMMER DAYS, THE WEATHER REMAINED PLEASANT THERE, SURROUNDED AS THE PLACE WAS WITH DENSE FORESTS AND SPARKLING STREAMS. KRISHNA, BALARAMA AND THEIR FRIENDS REVELLED IN THE BEAUTIFUL SURROUNDINGS, WRESTLING IN THE LUSH GRASS, DANCING AND PLAYING HIDE AND SEEK.

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"ONE DAY WHEN KRISHNA AND BALARAMA WERE TAKING THEIR CATTLE TO GRAZE BY THE RIVER-SIDE, PRALAMBA, THE ASURA, CAME THERE IN THE GUISE OF A COWHERD.

"KRISHNA HOWEVER WAS NOT FOOLED.

THERE IS SOMETHING ODD ABOUT THIS NEW BOY! I WILL HAVE TO TRICK HIM AND FIND OUT.

"HE CALLED ALL THE BOYS.

COME! WE WILL PLAY A NEW GAME TODAY.

WE WILL SPLIT INTO TWO TEAMS. WHO WILL BE THE LEADERS?

YOU AND BALARAMA, OF COURSE.

"KRISHNA AND BALARAMA CHOSE THEIR TEAMS AND PLAYED SEVERAL GAMES.

WE WON! OUR TEAM HAS WON THIS GAME. NOW FOR THE NEXT GAME, YOUR TEAM MUST CARRY OUR BOYS ON THEIR BACKS UP TO THAT TREE THERE.

"THE COWHERDS WERE THRILLED WITH THE NEW GAME. THE WINNER WOULD GLEEFULLY CLAMBER ONTO THE BACK OF THE LOSER.

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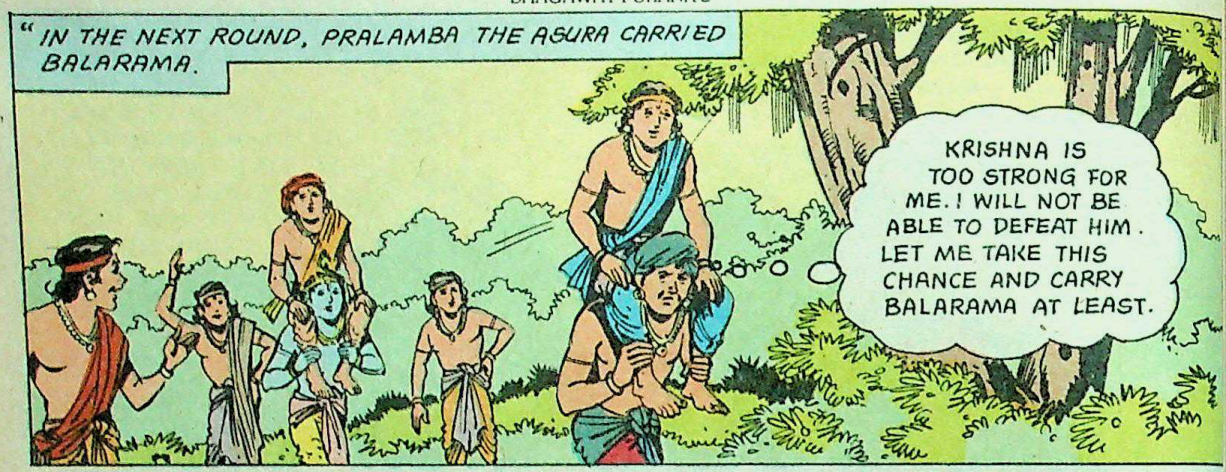

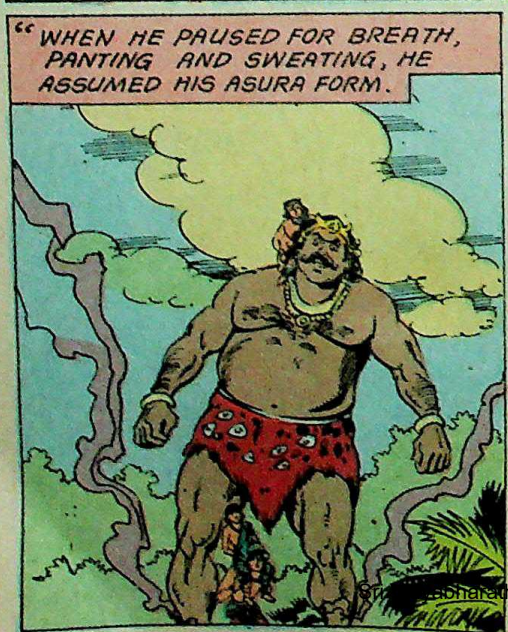

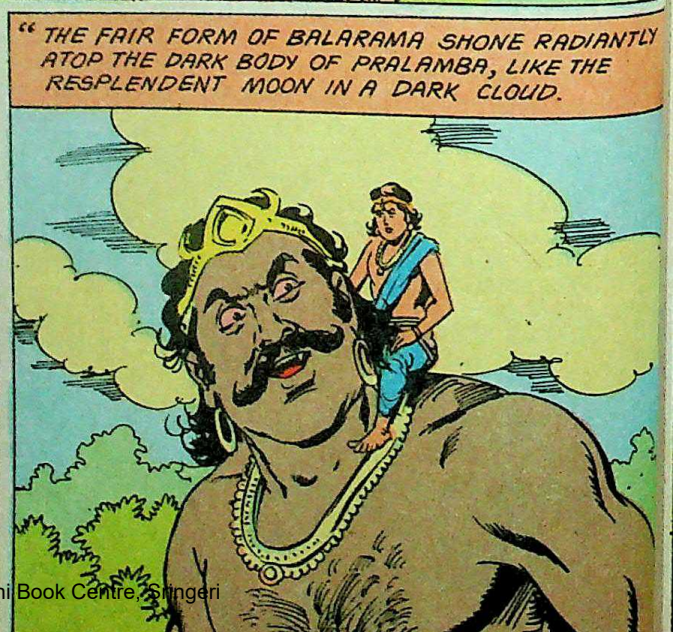

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"NOW THE ASURA BEGAN TO FLY UPWARDS.

WHAT'S THIS? I AM BEING CARRIED UP BY THIS UGLY CREATURE.

TAKE THIS!

"BALARAMA PROVED TRUE TO HIS NAME. ONE BLOW FROM HIS CLENCHED FIST WAS ENOUGH TO CRUSH THE ASURA'S HEAD.

"DOWN HE COLLAPSED TO THE EARTH, IN A HEAP.

AHHH!

"THE ANXIOUS COWHERDS WHO HAD BY NOW FOLLOWED THE PAIR, WERE RELIEVED TO SEE BALARAMA SAFE AND SOUND.

BRAVO, BALARAMA!

WELL DONE!

YOU WERE REALLY COURAGEOUS BALARAMA!

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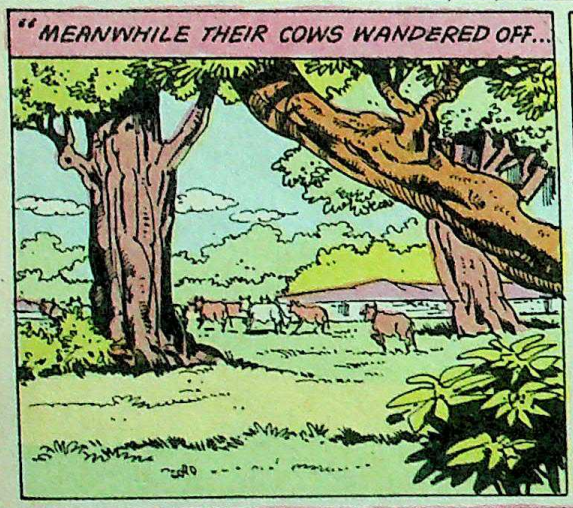

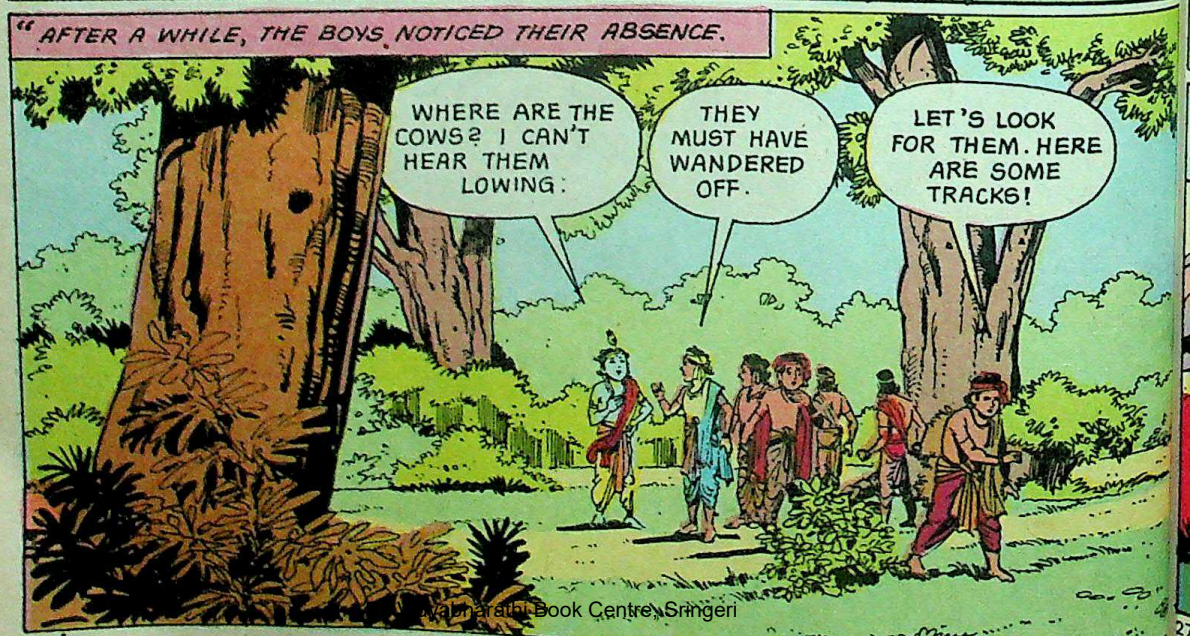

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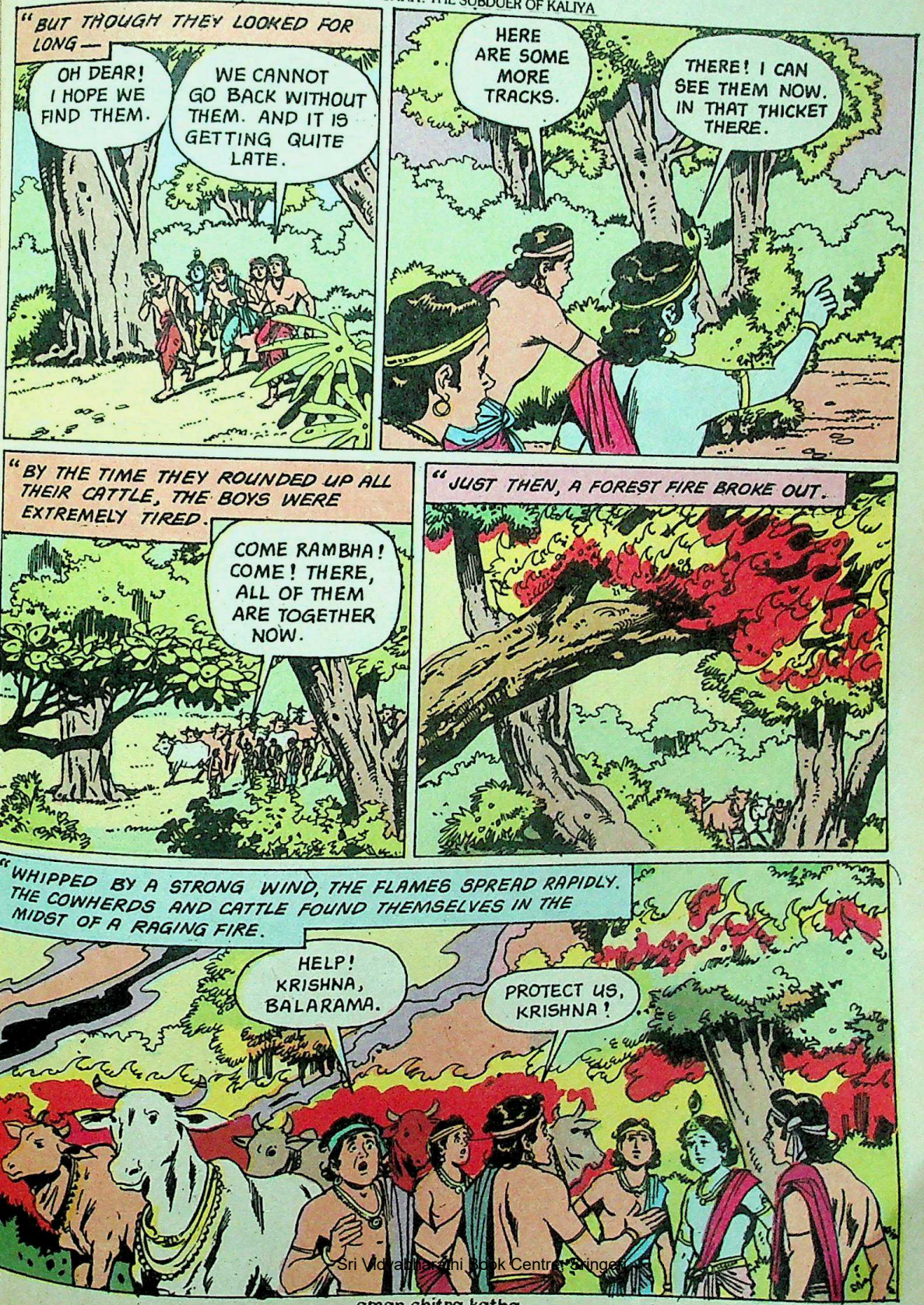

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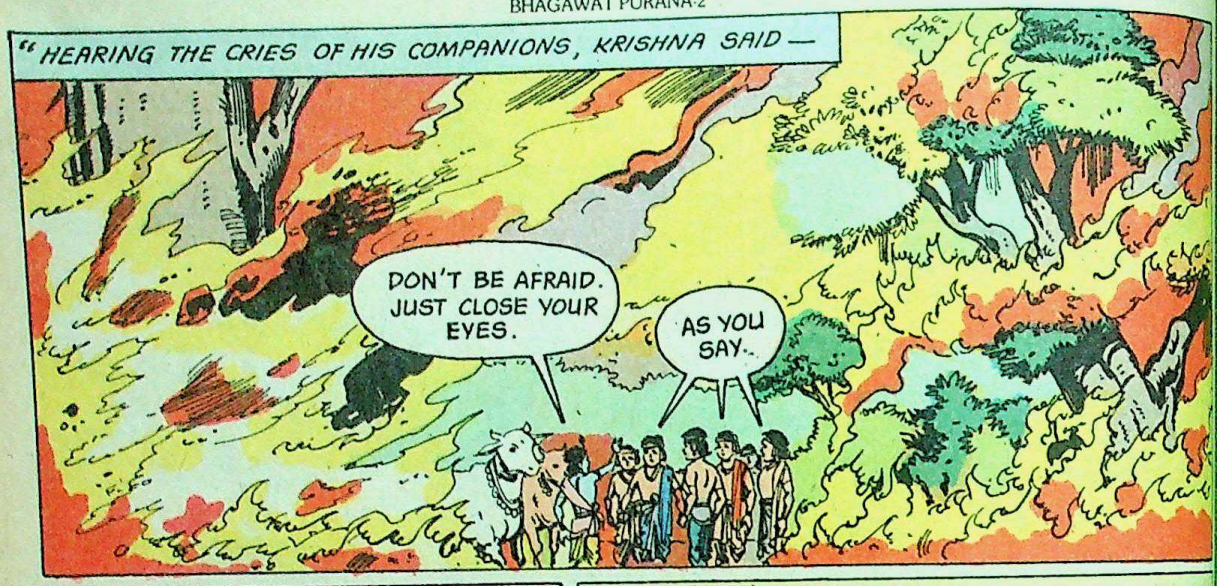

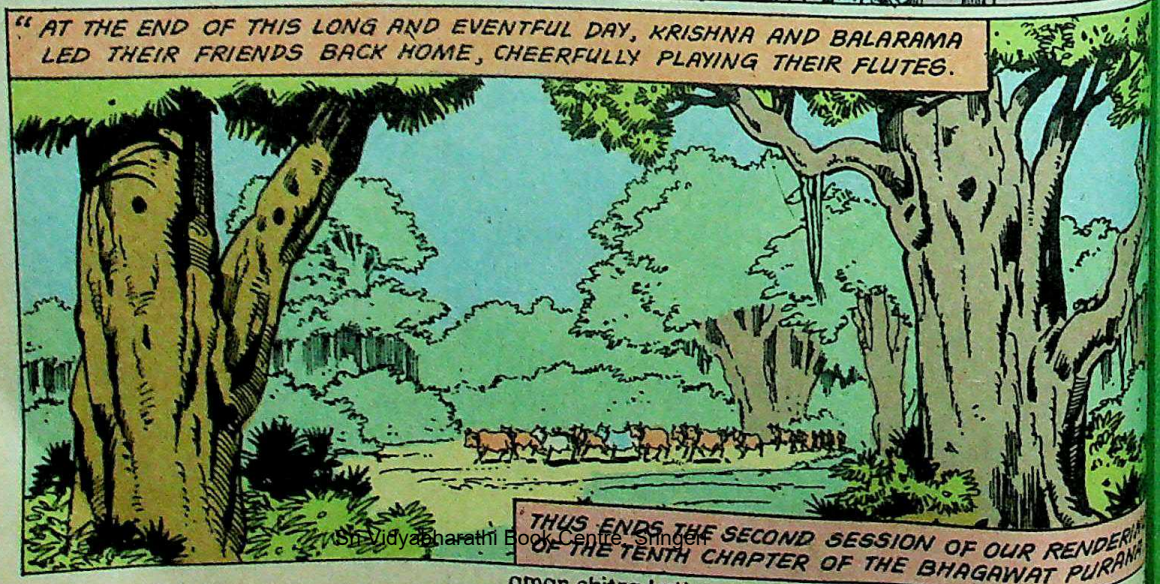

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KRISHNA—THE UPHOLDER OF GOVARDHANA

SHUKADEVA, WHO WAS NARRATING THE STORY OF KRISHNA TO PAREEKSHIT, SAID—

WHEN THE COWHERD BOYS RETURNED HOME AND RELATED THE EXPLOITS OF KRISHNA AND BALARAMA TO THE PEOPLE OF VRINDAVANA, THEY WERE STRUCK WITH WONDER. THEY BEGAN TO BELIEVE THAT TWO DIVINE BEINGS HAD BEEN BORN IN THEIR MIDST.

"THEN THE RAINY SEASON SET IN. THE EARTH, SCORCHED BY THE SUMMER HEAT, WAS BLANKETED WITH LUSH GREEN GRASS.

"THE FOREST TREES, LADEN WITH BLACK-BERRIES, SEEMED TO BECKON KRISHNA AND HIS MATES.

"ON SOME DAYS THEY WOULD SIT ON A ROCK AND EAT THEIR FOOD, ENJOYING THE PITTER-PATTER OF THE RAIN.

"BUT WHEN THE SHOWERS BECAME HEAVY, THEY WOULD RUN TO THE SHELTER OF A CAVE, OR HIDE IN THE HOLLOW OF A TREE, TO ESCAPE THEIR FURY.

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THE CLOUDS DISPERSED AND THE STORMY WINDS BECAME QUIET. NOW IT WAS AUTUMN. THE STARS SHONE BRIGHTLY IN THE CLOUDLESS SKIES.

"WHEN THE GOPIKAS OF VRINDAVANA HEARD THE SWEET SOUND OF KRISHNA'S MELODIOUS FLUTE THEY WOULD STOP ALL WORK AND LISTEN.

OH THAT KRISHNA! HOW ENCHANTING HE IS WITH THE PEACOCK FEATHER IN HIS CURLS, YELLOW FLOWERS IN HIS EARS, THE GOLDEN CLOTH DRAPED OVER HIS DARK FORM, AND THE GARLAND OF FRAGRANT FLOWERS AROUND HIS NECK.

WHEN HE PLAYS HIS FLUTE, EVEN THE BEASTS OF THE JUNGLE STOP TO HEAR HIM.

WHY TALK OF THE BIRDS AND THE BEASTS. EVEN THE STREAMS AND RIVERS SEEM TO RESPOND TO THE MELODY OF KRISHNA'S FLUTE.

LEAVE ALONE THE EARTH, EVEN THE CLOUDS IN THE SKY SEEM TO BE EAGER TO PROTECT KRISHNA. THE TINY RAIN DROPS ARE LIKE LITTLE WHITE FLOWER OFFERINGS MADE TO OUR KRISHNA.

"WHEN WINTER SET IN, THE MAIDENS OF VRAJA OBSERVED THEIR CUSTOMARY PRAYERS TO THE GODDESS DURGA.

"SINGING AND CHATTING, THEY WOULD GO TOGETHER TO BATHE IN THE YAMUNA AT DAY-BREAK, MAKE A CLAY IMAGE OF THE GODDESS ON THE BANK, AND PRAY TO IT.

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"ONE DAY, THEY WERE SPLASHING ABOUT IN THE WATER.

LOOK, OUR CLOTHES HAVE VANISHED.

STRANGE. WE HAD LEFT THEM ON THE BANK THERE.

JUST THEN THEY SAW KRISHNA SITTING ASTRIDE THE BRANCH OF A KADAMBA TREE NEAR BY.

HA! HA! HA!

COME AND COLLECT YOUR BELONGINGS.

THAT'S NOT FAIR, KRISHNA. DON'T TORMENT US SO.

COME, KRISHNA, WE KNOW YOU ARE NANDA'S DARLING SON. ALL THE PEOPLE OF VRAJA DOTE ON YOU. WE TOO ARE EVER WILLING TO DO YOUR BIDDING.

IN THAT CASE, YOU MUST COME HERE, BOW TO ME, AND TAKE YOUR BELONGINGS.

SHUKADEVA SAID TO PAREEKSHIT—

KRISHNA WAS TRYING TO TEST THE DEVOTION OF THE GOPIKAS FOR HIM. HE TEASED AND TAUNTED THEM, LAUGHED AT THEIR PLIGHT, MADE THEM ACT LIKE PUPPETS AT HIS MERCY. YET THEY WERE NOT ANNOYED WITH HIM.

AFTER THEY HAD COLLECTED THEIR CLOTHES FROM KRISHNA, HE SAID—

MAY YOUR DESIRES BE ALL FULFILLED. NOW RETURN TO YOUR HOMES, DEAR MAIDENS, AND AWAIT THE MOONLIT NIGHTS OF AUTUMN.

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"ONE DAY WHEN KRISHNA AND THE COWHERDS WERE GRAZING THEIR COWS, HE SAID—

BEHOLD THESE TREES. THEY BEAR THE SEVERE SUN, THE LASHING WIND AND RAIN, AND YET PROTECT US. LEAVES AND FLOWERS, BARK AND WOOD, SAP AND GUM, FUEL AND FRUITS. MANY ARE THE GIFTS THE TREES BESTOW ON US. BLESSED ARE THE PEOPLE WHO GIVE GENEROUSLY TO OTHERS LIKE THESE TREES.

"HUNGRY AND THIRSTY, THE BOYS APPROACHED THE RIVER BANK.

KRISHNA, WE HAVE QUENCHED OUR THIRST WITH THE RIVER WATER. BUT I AM FEELING VERY HUNGRY.

ME TOO. KRISHNA, BALARAMA, YOU MUST THINK OF A WAY TO SATISFY OUR HUNGER.

"KRISHNA SAID—

A LITTLE DISTANCE FROM HERE, THERE IS A GROUP OF BRAHMANAS PERFORMING A YAJNA. TELL THEM THAT KRISHNA AND BALARAMA HAVE SENT YOU, AND THEY WILL SURELY GIVE YOU SOME FOOD.

WE'VE BEEN SENT BY KRISHNA AND BALARAMA. DO GIVE US SOME FOOD, O BRAHMANAS!

"BUT THE BRAHMANAS IGNORED THE BOYS AND CONTINUED THEIR YAJNA.

"SADLY, THE COWHERD BOYS RETURNED TO KRISHNA.

WHAT HAPPENED? DIDN'T THE BRAHMANAS GIVE YOU ANY FOOD?

THEY SAID NEITHER YES NOR NO. WE FELT DISAPPOINTED.

"KRISHNA SAID WITH A LAUGH—

JUST BECAUSE YOU ARE UNSUCCESSFUL ONCE, YOU MUST NOT STOP TRYING. GO AND MEET THEIR WIVES THIS TIME. THEY ARE DEVOTED TO ME AND WILL CERTAINLY GIVE YOU FOOD.

"OBEDIENTLY THE COWHERDS WENT BACK AND REQUESTED THE WIVES OF THE BRAHMANAS.

KRISHNA AND BALARAMA HAVE SENT US TO YOU. THEY ARE HUNGRY AND HAVE REQUESTED YOU FOR SOME FOOD.

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"JUST THE MENTION OF KRISHNA'S NAME WAS ENOUGH.

FOR KRISHNA! SURELY WE WILL DO ANYTHING TO HAVE A GLIMPSE OF HIM.

FOR SO LONG WE HAVE HEARD OF HIS PRAISE. THOUGH WE HAVE NEVER SEEN HIM, HE HAS BECOME VERY DEAR TO US.

LIKE RIVERS RUSHING TO MEET THE SEA, THE WOMEN EAGERLY HURRIED TO MEET KRISHNA. THEY CARRIED VESSELS FILLED WITH DELICIOUS FOOD THEY HAD COOKED FOR THE YAJNA BEING PERFORMED BY THEIR HUSBANDS.

"WHEN THEY BEHELD KRISHNA, SHINING BRIGHTLY IN HIS BEAUTIFUL GOLDEN GARMENTS, THE CURLY LOCKS AROUND HIS SMILING, DUSKY FACE, THEY WERE DELIGHTED AT THE SIGHT.

"WITH A PLAYFUL SMILE, KRISHNA SAID—

WELCOME, DEAR LADIES. I KNOW YOUR DEVOTION FOR ME HAS DRAWN YOU HERE. YOUR LOVE FOR ME IS INDEED PURE AND SELFLESS.

BUT NOW THAT YOU HAVE MET ME, YOU MUST RETURN TO YOUR HOMES. YOUR PRESENCE IS NECESSARY TO COMPLETE THE YAJNA BEING PERFORMED BY YOUR HUSBANDS.

"THE WOMEN REPLIED—

DON'T SEND US AWAY. WE HAVE COME TO YOU, ABANDONING EVERYTHING. OUR FAMILIES MAY NOT ACCEPT US NOW. YOU ARE OUR ONLY HOPE.

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"KRISHNA GENTLY REASSURED THEM.

REST ASSURED, NO ONE WILL TALK ILL OF YOU. EVEN THE CELESTIALS WILL ADMIRE YOUR DEVOTION. YOU MAY KEEP ME IN YOUR MIND, BUT GO BACK NOW.

"INDEED WHEN THEIR WIVES RETURNED TO THE SACRIFICIAL HALL, THE BRAHMANAS ACCEPTED THEIR RETURN WITHOUT ANY COMMENT AND PROCEEDED TO COMPLETE THE YAJNA.

"WHILE KRISHNA AND HIS COMPANIONS HAPPILY FEASTED ON THE FOOD BROUGHT BY THE WIVES OF THE BRAHMANAS...

"... THE BRAHMANAS, WHO HAD IGNORED KRISHNA'S REQUEST, WERE FILLED WITH REMORSE..

FIE ON US! WE IGNORED THE REQUEST OF LORD KRISHNA HIMSELF. OF WHAT USE IS OUR KNOWLEDGE?

AND LOOK AT THE DEVOTION OF OUR WIVES FOR THE LORD. THESE WOMEN HAVE NEITHER LEARNT THE VEDAS NOR UNDERGONE PENANCE. YET THEY HAVE UTTER FAITH IN LORD KRISHNA. HOW LUCKY WE ARE TO HAVE SUCH WIVES.

"OVERCOME WITH SHAME AND REPENTANCE, THE BRAHMANAS LONGED TO MEET KRISHNA AND BALARAMA. BUT FEAR OF KAMSA HELD THEM BACK.

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"IN VRINDAVANA, KRISHNA NOTICED ALL THE COWHERDS WERE BUSY PREPARING FOR SOME YAJNA. APPROACHING HIS FATHER, HE ASKED—

FATHER, WHAT CELEBRATION ARE YOU ALL BUSY PREPARING FOR?

WHAT IS THE MERIT OF THIS YAJNA? WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE? WHO ARE THE PEOPLE WHO WILL PERFORM IT? DO TELL ME, FATHER.

"NANDA SAID—

LORD INDRA IS THE GOD OF THE RAIN CLOUDS. HE IS THE ONE WHO SHOWERS THE LIFE-GIVING RAIN ON US. WE PERFORM YAJNAS TO PLEASE HIM.

WHY, EVEN THE MATERIALS USED FOR THE YAJNA ARE PRODUCED BECAUSE OF THE RAIN. FOR SEVERAL GENERATIONS WE HAVE BEEN VENERATING INDRA THUS.

"KRISHNA REPLIED—

A LIVING BEING IS BORN AND DIES ACCORDING TO HIS KARMA. JOY AND SORROW, FEAR AND PROSPERITY ARE ALL AN OUTCOME OF KARMA. WHY THEN DO WE NEED INDRA?

A MAN SHOULD WORSHIP WHATEVER HE LIVES BY. FOR VAISHYAS LIKE US, FOUR TYPES OF LIVELIHOOD ARE POSSIBLE—AGRICULTURE, TRADE, CATTLE-REARING AND MONEY-LENDING.

WE ARE FOREST DWELLERS. FOR LONG, OUR PEOPLE HAVE TENDED CATTLE. THESE FORESTS AND MOUNTAINS ARE OUR HOMES. LET US THEREFORE WORSHIP OUR COWS, AND OUR MOUNTAINS.

ALL THESE THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN COLLECTED FOR INDRA'S YAJNA, LET THEM BE USED FOR THE OTHER SACRIFICE.

SUMMON WELL-VERSED BRAHMANAS TO CONDUCT THE SACRIFICE. LET A SUMPTUOUS FEAST BE PREPARED. WE WILL MAKE AN OFFERING TO THIS MOUNTAIN HERE.

THEN BEDECKING OURSELVES IN FINE GARMENTS AND JEWELS, WE WILL GO ROUND THE COWS, THE BRAHMANAS AND MOUNT GOVARDHANA. THIS IS MY OPINION, FATHER. SUCH A SACRIFICE WILL PLEASE ME IMMENSELY.

Sri Vidyaprakasha Trust Centre, Srirangeri

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"NANDA AND THE OTHER COWHERDS WERE CONVINCED.

WE WILL DO AS YOU SAY, KRISHNA.

YES, LET'S START THE PREPARATIONS.

"BRAHMANAS LIGHTED THE HOLY FIRE AND RECITED THE SACRED MANTRAS.

"THE COWHERDS PRESENTED THE BRAHMANAS WITH GIFTS.

"THE COWS WERE OFFERED TENDER LUSH GLASS. VARIOUS OFFERINGS WERE ALSO PLACED BEFORE MOUNT GOVARDHANA.

"WITH NANDA LEADING THE WAY, THE COWHERDS WENT ROUND GOVARDHANA.

"THE GAILY DRESSED GOPIKAS SAT ON BULLOCK-CARTS AND WENT ROUND THE MOUNTAIN WHILE SINGING SONGS IN PRAISE OF KRISHNA.

I MUST CONVINCE THEM THAT THEIR ACTION IS RIGHT. LET ME ASSUME ANOTHER FORM.

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"KRISHNA APPEARED IN THE GUISE OF AN ENORMOUS BEING ON THE TOP OF MOUNT GOVARDHANA.

I AM GOVARDHANA

"BEFORE THEIR VERY EYES, THE GIGANTIC FORM BEGAN TO GOBBLE UP THE OFFERINGS MADE TO IT. FEIGNING SURPRISE, KRISHNA SAID —

HOW WONDERFUL! BEHOLD HOW THE MOUNTAIN HAS GRACED US WITH HIS PRESENCE.

HE CAN ASSUME ANY FORM. HE CAN DESTROY ANY ONE WHO DISRESPECTS HIM. FOR THE WELFARE OF OUR CATTLE AND OURSELVES, LET US BOW BEFORE HIM.

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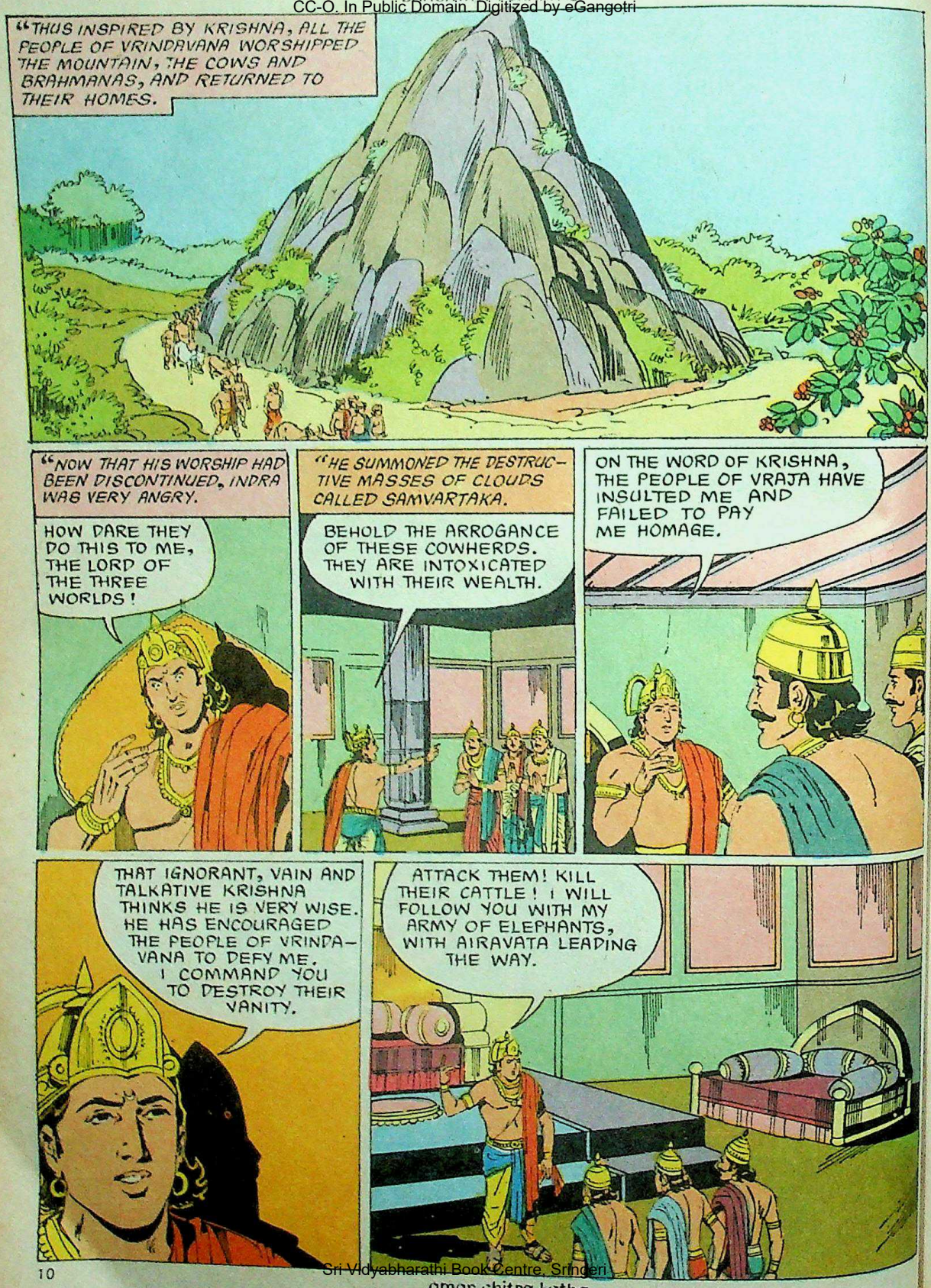

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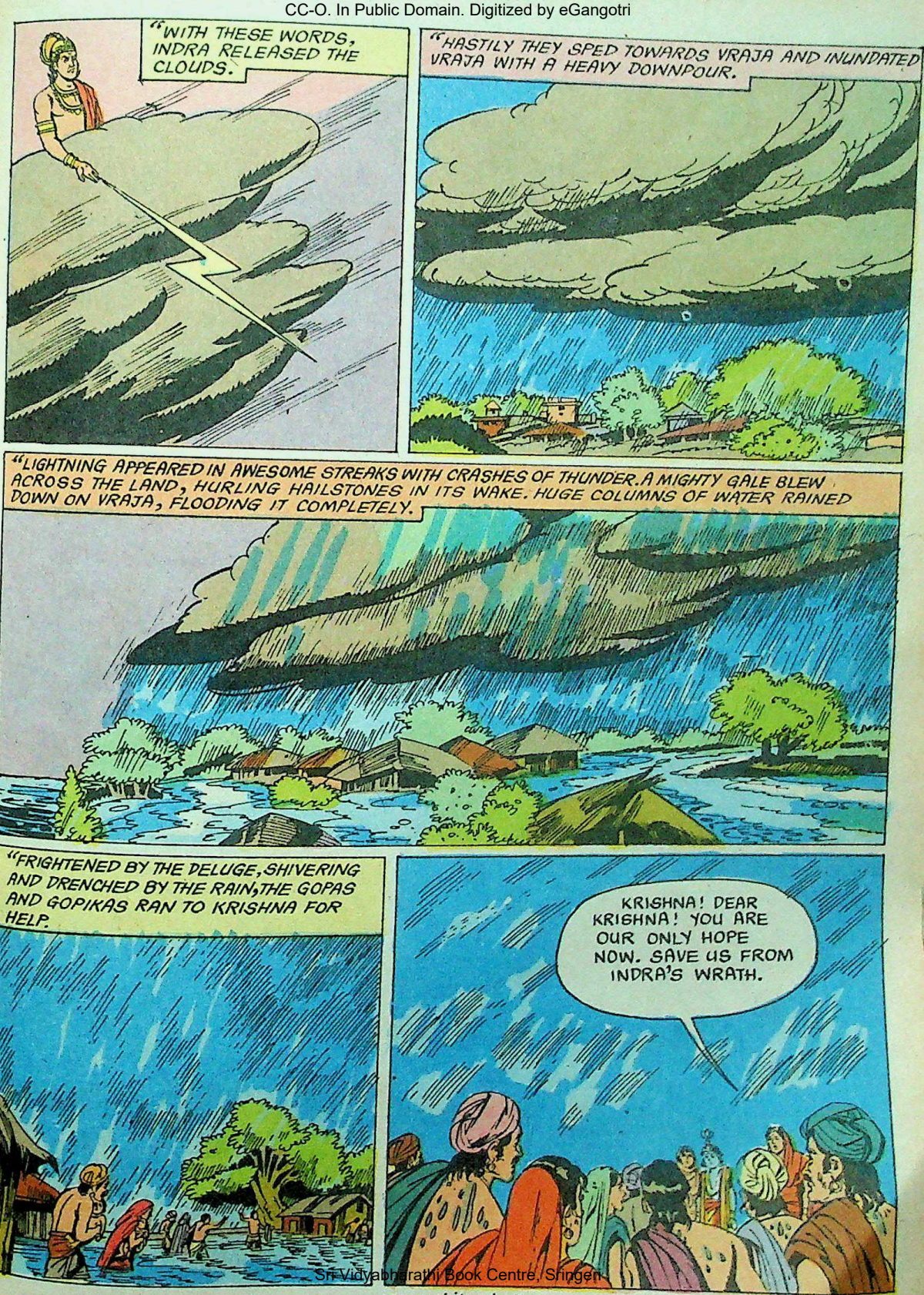

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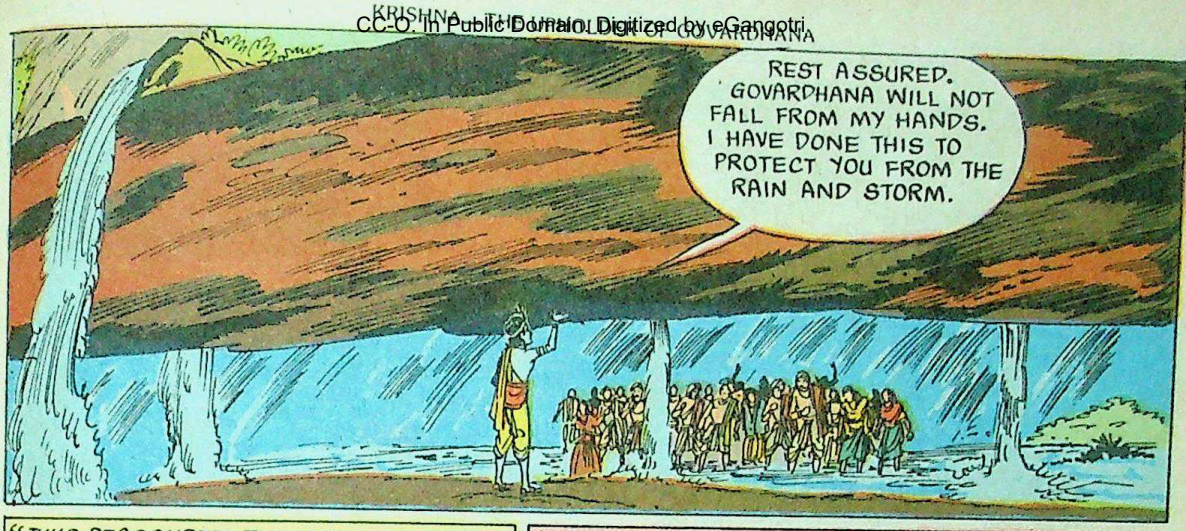

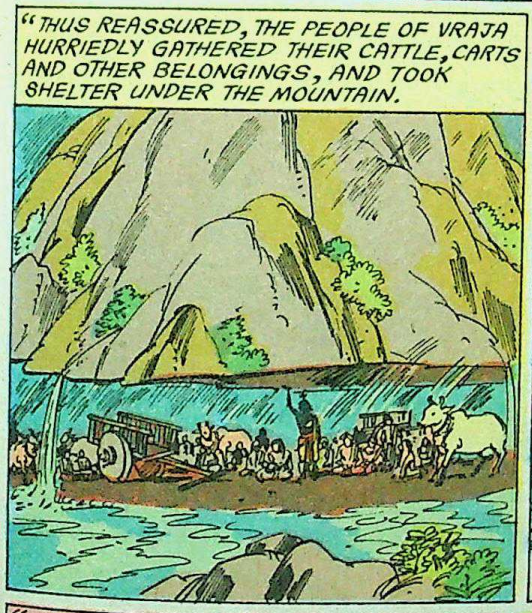

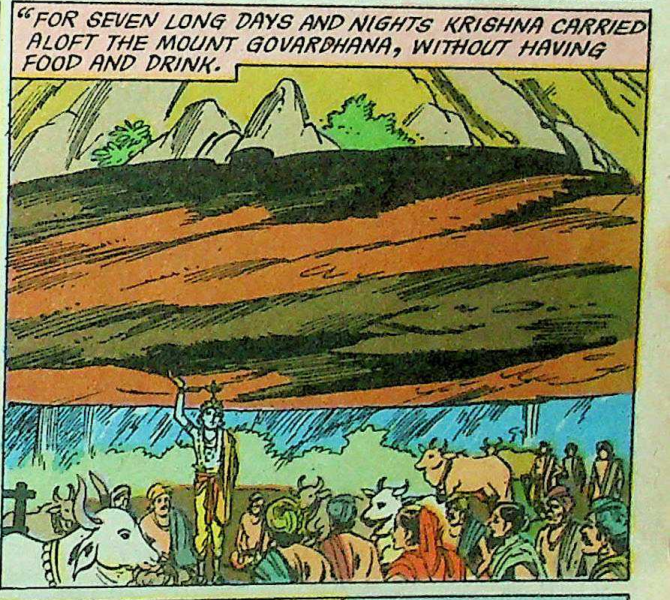

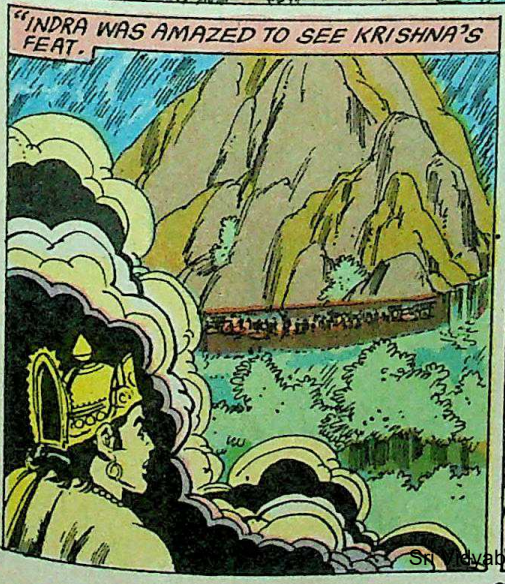

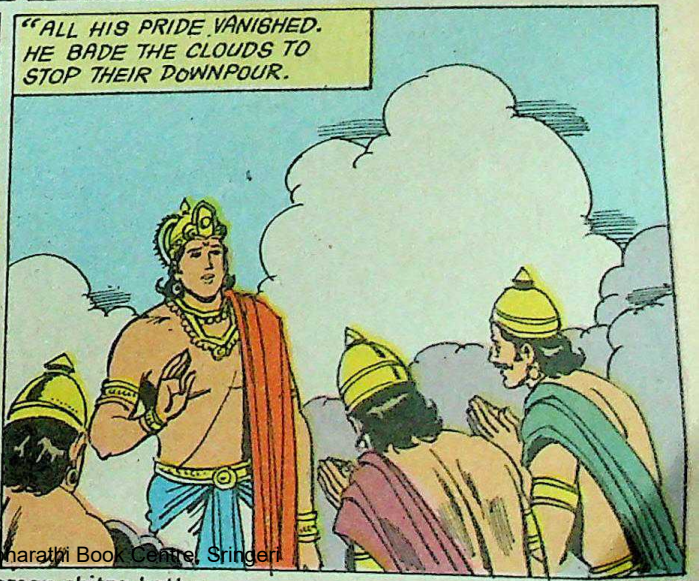

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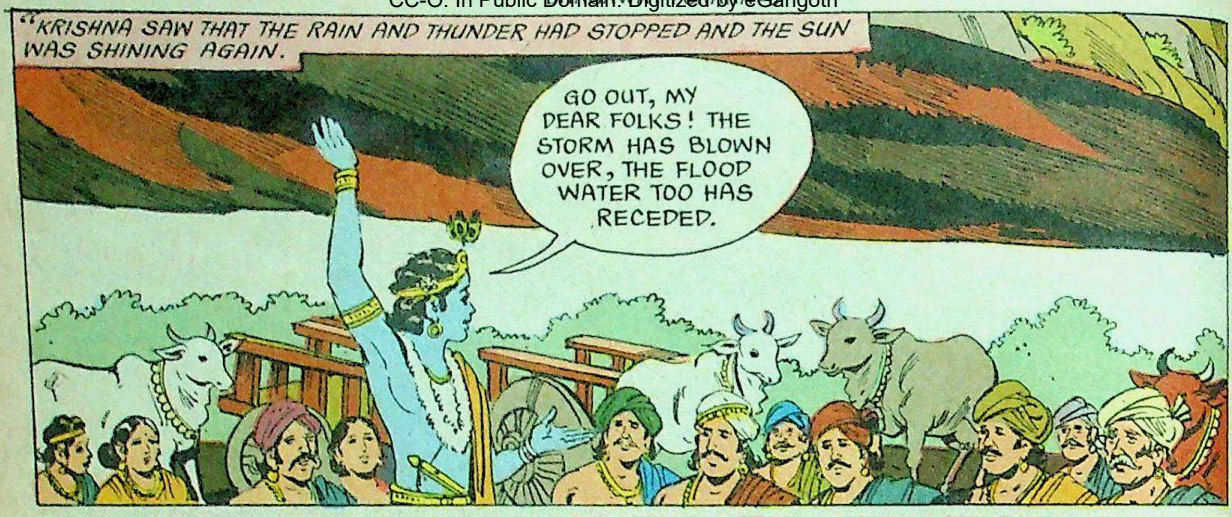

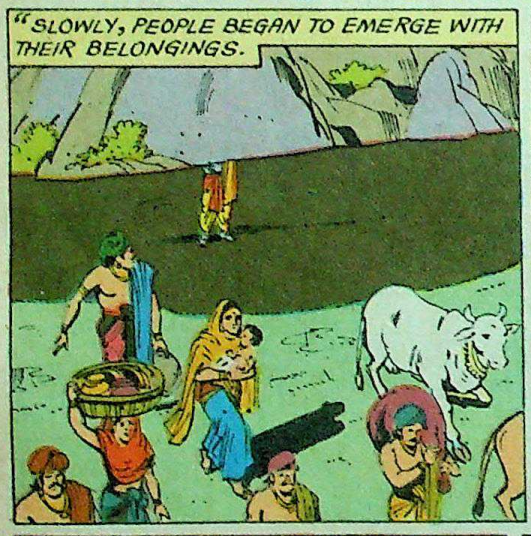

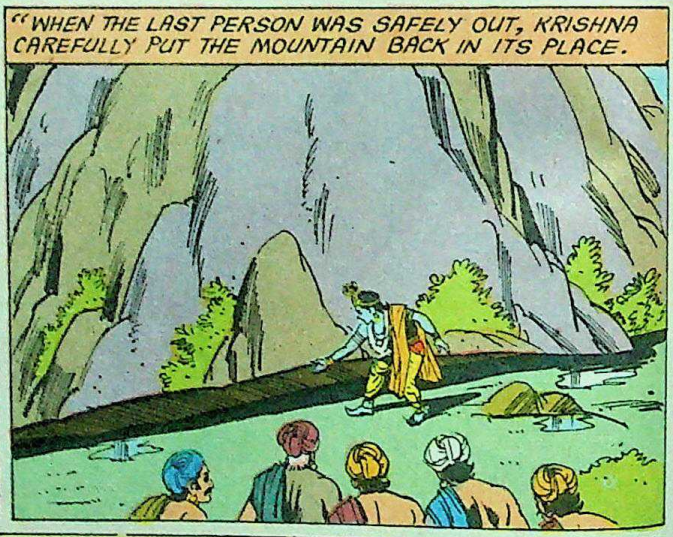

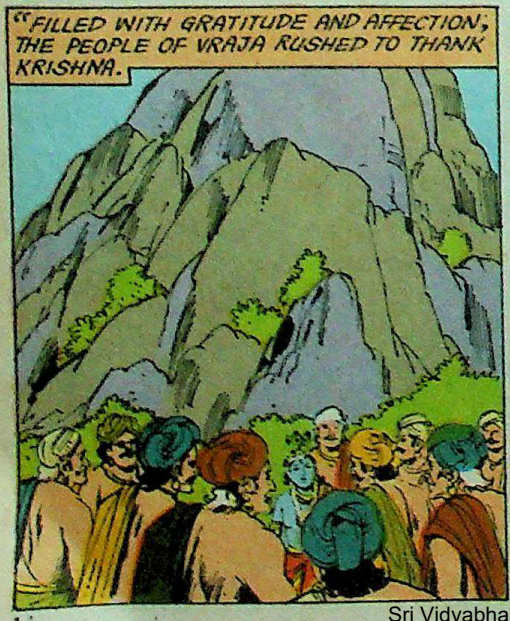

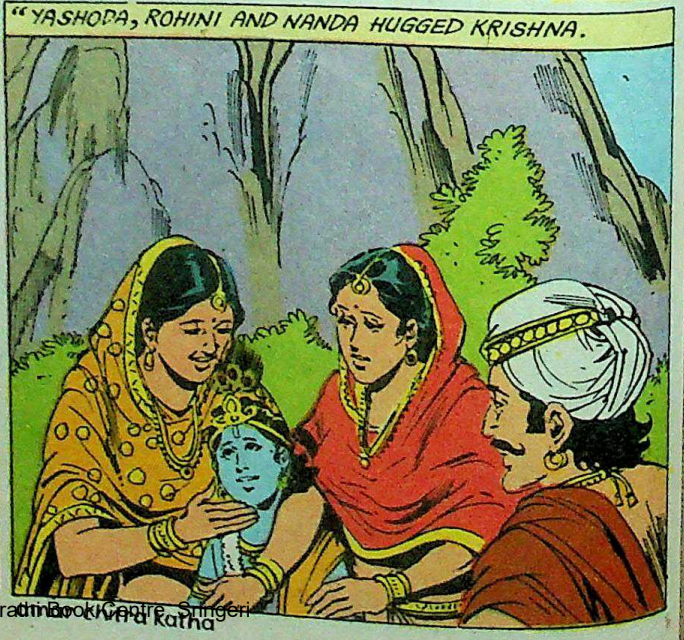

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"THIS EVENT WAS DISCUSSED OVER AND OVER AGAIN AT THE VILLAGE GET-TOGETHERS.

THE DEEDS OF THIS KRISHNA ARE INDEED WONDERFUL. LIKE AN ELEPHANT PLUCKING A LOTUS FLOWER, THIS SEVEN-YEAR-OLD LIFTED GOVARDHANA AND HELD IT UP FOR SEVEN DAYS.

REMEMBER HOW HE KILLED THE WICKED POOTANA WHEN HE WAS A MERE INFANT, WITH HIS EYES HARDLY OPEN?

AND HOW AT THREE MONTHS HE OVERTURNED THE LOADED CART?

HE WAS JUST ONE YEAR OLD WHEN HE THROTTLED THE DEMON TRINAVARTA.

HOW ABOUT HIS FEAT OF TEARING ASUNDER THE DEOMON HERON.

REMEMBER THE ARJUNA TREES HE UPRDOTED?

CRASH

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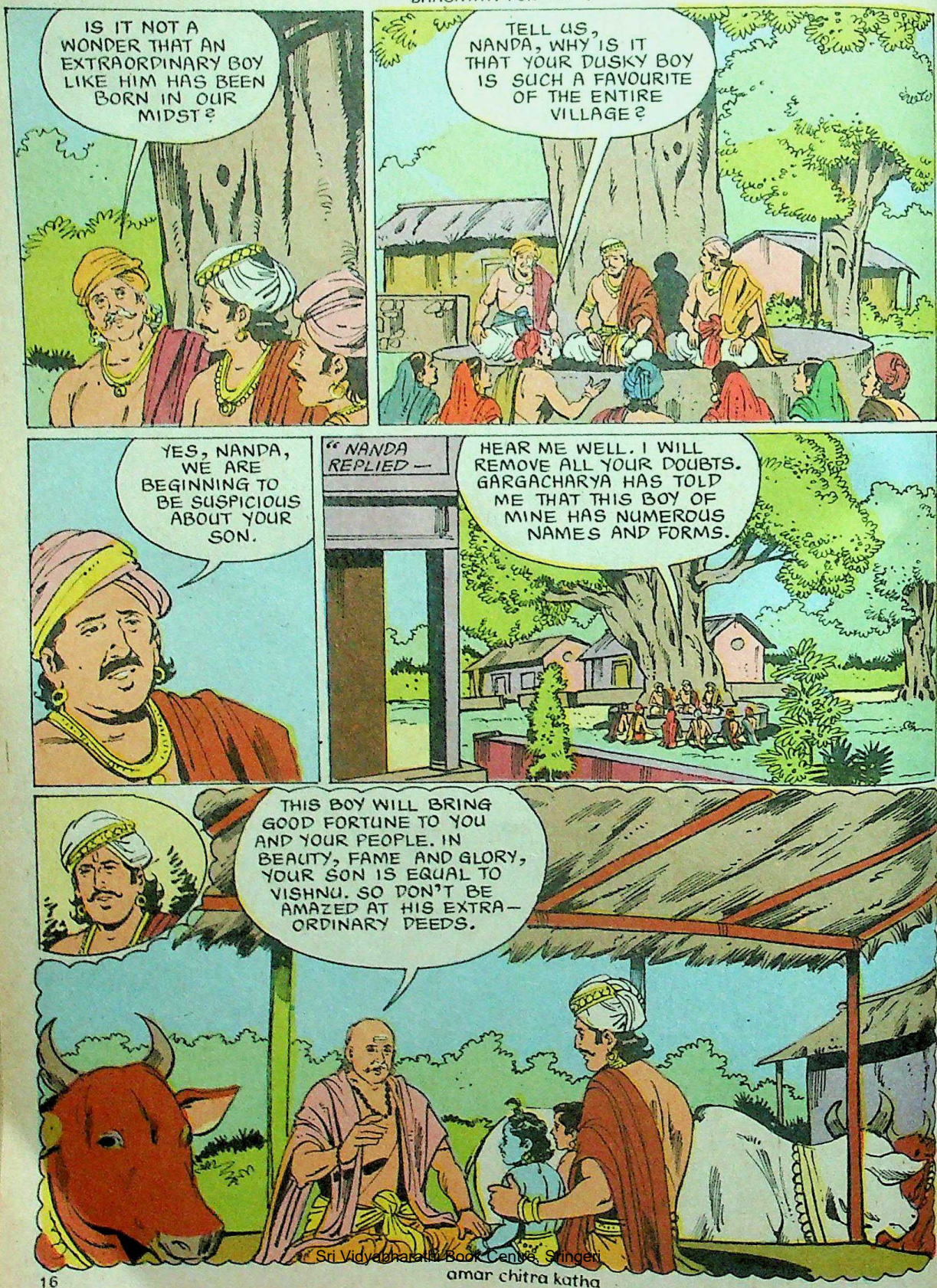

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SINCE THAT DAY, I CONSIDER THIS BOY AS A PART OF VISHNU.

NOW WE UNDERSTAND!

NO WONDER HE IS SO POWERFUL.

"SOME DAYS LATER, WHEN NANDA OBSERVED THE EKADASHI* FAST, AFTER PRAYING ALL DAY, HE STEPPED INTO THE WATER OF YAMUNA FOR A BATH IN THE EVENING.

"THE TIME BETWEEN SUNDOWN AND DAY-BREAK WAS CONSIDERED INAUSPICIOUS SINCE THE DEMONS WERE AT LARGE THEN. ONE OF THEM CAUGHT HOLD OF NANDA AND DRAGGED HIM AWAY.

"WHEN THE COWHERDS SAW HIM DISAPPEAR UNDERWATER, THEY CRIED OUT.

KRISHNA! KRISHNA! RESCUE YOUR FATHER.

HURRY, BALARAMA HURRY!

"HEARING THEIR CRIES, KRISHNA RUSHED TO THE SPOT AND DIVED INTO THE WATER TO CONFRONT VARUNA, THE LORD OF THE NETHER WORLD.

* 11 TH DAY OF THE LUNAR CALENDAR.

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"FILLED WITH AWE AND JOY AT THE SIGHT OF KRISHNA, VARUNA BOWED DOWN TO WORSHIP HIM.

ACCEPT MY PRAYERS, O LORD. FORGIVE MY SERVANT FOR SEIZING YOUR FATHER. YOU ARE A WITNESS TO ALL OUR ACTION.

"NANDA WAS AMAZED TO SEE THE WEALTH AND RICHES OF VARUNA AND THE SPLENDOUR OF HIS PALACE. BUT MORE SO BY HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS KRISHNA.

HOW RESPECTFULLY AND HUMBLY VARUNA APPROACHES KRISHNA.

"WHEN KRISHNA RETURNED WITH NANDA TO VRAJA, HE RELATED THE EVENTS TO HIS FRIENDS.

... AND THEN VARUNA HIMSELF BOWED TO MY KRISHNA.

WHY, HE IS THE LORD HIMSELF.

WILL HE EVER REVEAL TO US HIS TRUE SELF?

"KRISHNA LEARNT WHAT WAS IN THEIR MINDS, AND SOON REVEALED TO THEM HIS INFINITE FORM. THEY WERE FILLED WITH ECSTASY AT THE SIGHT.

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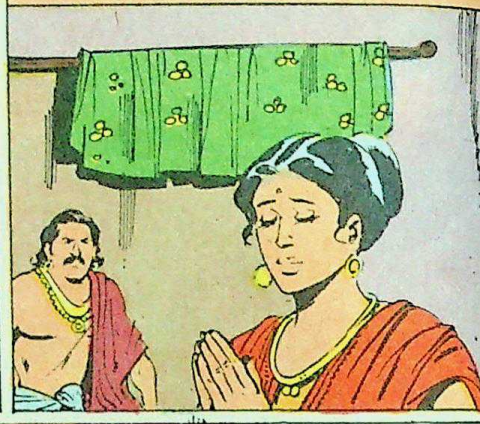
"ANOTHER WHO WAS ADORNING HERSELF RUSHED OUT WITH HER TRESSES FLYING AND KAJAL* SMEARED.

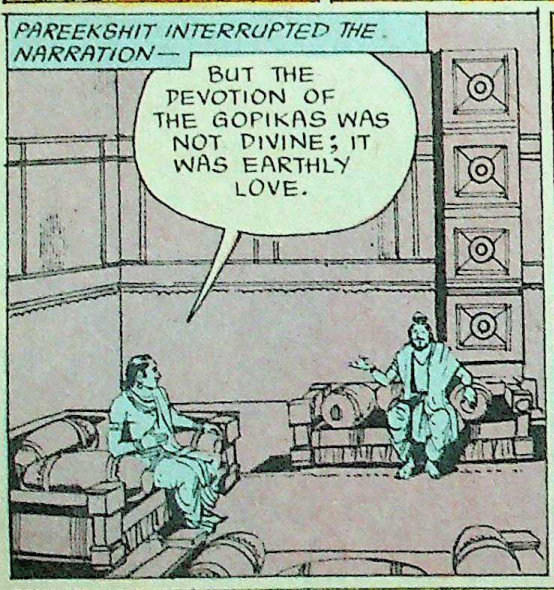
"EVEN WHEN THE ELDERS IN THEIR FAMILIES TRIED TO RESTRAIN THEM, THEY PAID NO HEED, AND RAN OUT.

"THOSE WHO WERE FORCEFULLY CONFINED AT HOME, CLOSED THEIR EYES AND MEDITATED ON KRISHNA AND FELT A DEEP SENSE OF BLISS.



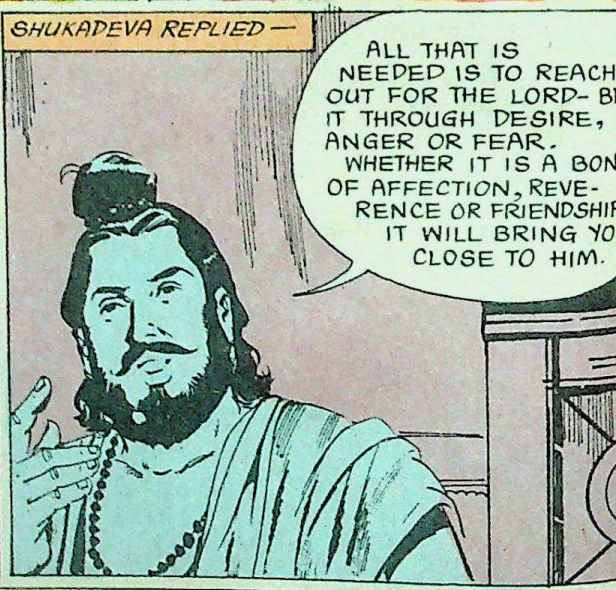
PAREEKSHIT INTERRUPTED THE NARRATION—

BUT THE DEVOTION OF THE GOPIKAS WAS NOT DIVINE; IT WAS EARTHLY LOVE.



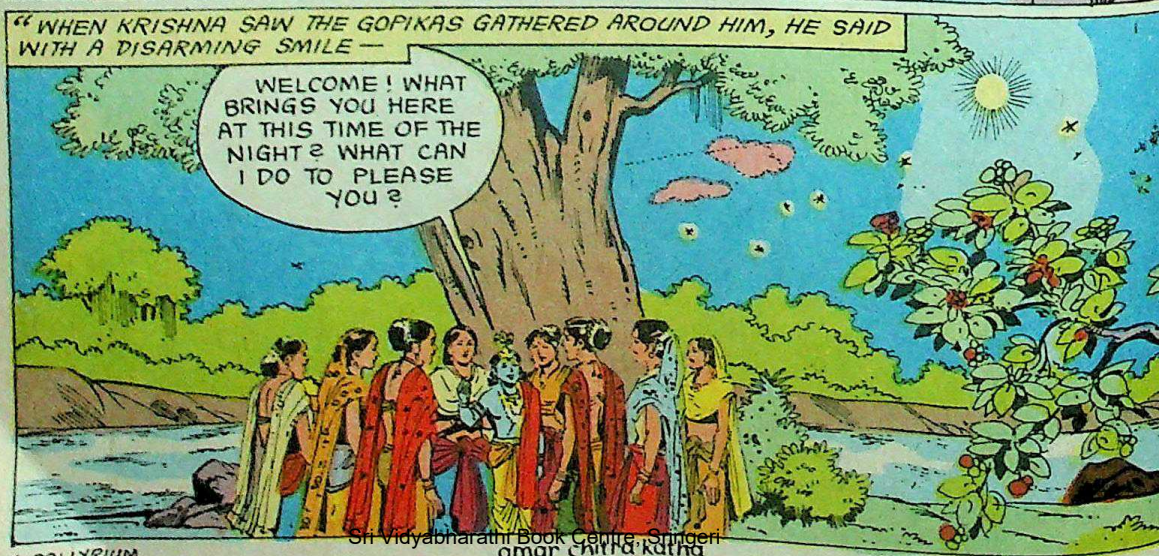
SHUKADEVA REPLIED—

ALL THAT IS NEEDED IS TO REACH OUT FOR THE LORD- BE IT THROUGH DESIRE, ANGER OR FEAR. WHETHER IT IS A BON OF AFFECTION, REVE- RENCE OR FRIENDSHIP IT WILL BRING YO CLOSE TO HIM.



"WHEN KRISHNA SAW THE GOPIKAS GATHERED AROUND HIM, HE SAID WITH A DISARMING SMILE—

WELCOME! WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE AT THIS TIME OF THE NIGHT? WHAT CAN I DO TO PLEASE YOU?



* COLLYRIUM

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THE FOREST TREES, LADEN WITH FLOWERS, ARE INDEED ENCHANTING IN THE MELLOW LIGHT OF THE FULL MOON. THE COOL BREEZE, CARESSING THE WAVES, IS SOOTHING TOO. BUT DO NOT LINGER HERE. YOUR HUSBANDS AWAIT YOU. GO BACK TO YOUR HOMES.

"THE GOPIKAS WERE DISAPPOINTED WITH HIS WORDS. WITH THEIR HEADS CAST DOWN, THEY BIT THEIR LIPS TO CONTROL THEIR TEARS.

"IN VOICES CHOKED WITH EMOTION, THEY SAID TO KRISHNA—

ACCEPT OUR DEVOTION, O KRISHNA. IT IS NO LONGER A SECRET THAT YOU HAVE APPEARED IN VRAJA FOR OUR PROTECTION. ALLOW US TO SERVE YOU.

"WITH A SMILE, KRISHNA AGREED. ON THE WIDE EXPANSE OF SILVERY SANDS NEAR THE YAMUNA, KRISHNA BEGAN TO SPORT WITH THE GOPIKAS.

"SHINING BRIGHTLY, LIKE A MOON SURROUNDED BY STARS, KRISHNA SANG AND DANCED WITH THE GOPIKAS.

"DELIGHTED WITH HIS ATTENTIONS, EACH GOPIKA THOUGHT HERSELF TO BE THE BEST WOMAN ON EARTH.

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"NOTING THEIR PRIDE, KRISHNA SUDDENLY VANISHED FROM THEIR MIDST.

"WHEN THE GOPIKAS BECAME AWARE OF HIS ABSENCE THEY WERE FILLED WITH DESPAIR AND ANXIETY.

WHERE IS KRISHNA?

WHY, HE WAS RIGHT HERE A MOMENT AGO!

"IN THEIR SEARCH FOR LORD KRISHNA, THEY EVEN TALKED TO THE TREES.

O PEEPUL! HAVE YOU SEEN THE SON OF NANDA, THE ONE WITH A LOVELY SMILE?

KACHNAR, CHAMPAK, JAMUN, KADAMBA*! TELL US WHERE TO FIND KRISHNA.

"THE GOPIKAS WERE SO ABSORBED IN KRISHNA THAT THEY MOMENTARILY FORGOT THEMSELVES, AND COMPLETELY IDENTIFIED WITH HIM.

I AM KRISHNA.

"ONE GOPIKA ENACTED THE LIFTING OF GOVARDHANA.

I AM KRISHNA. DON'T BE AFRAID OF THE RAIN. I'LL PROTECT YOU.

* NAMES OF TREES

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"ANOTHER PLAYED THE ROLE OF KRISHNA OVERPOWERING KALIYA.

O VILE SERPENT GO AWAY! DON'T YOU KNOW I HAVE TAKEN BIRTH TO PUNISH THE WICKED?

"ONE GOPIKA SAID—

I AM BABY KRISHNA, AND YOU ARE THE CART. I'LL CRY AND OVERTURN YOU WITH MY FEET.

"AS THEY WERE WANDERING IN THE FORESTS IN SEARCH OF KRISHNA—

WAIT! SEE THESE FOOTSTEPS.

YES, THEY ARE KRISHNA'S.

LET'S FOLLOW THEM.

BUT, LOOK, THERE IS ANOTHER TRACK BESIDE.

THEY ARE A GIRL'S.

LET'S GO AHEAD AND SEE WHO HIS FAVOURITE IS.

LOOK HERE! THE MARKS OF KRISHNA STANDING ON TIP-TOE. HE MUST HAVE BEEN PLUCKING FLOWERS FOR HER HERE.

"KRISHNA WANTED TO TEACH A LESSON TO THE PROUD WOMEN AND HAD INDEED GONE AWAY WITH ONE OF THEM.

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"THE GOPIKA WHO HAD ACCOMPANIED KRISHNA, WAS ELATED.

I AM INDEED THE BEST. I AM KRISHNA'S CHOSEN ONE.

"SURE OF HER SWAY OVER KRISHNA, SHE SAID—

OH KRISHNA I CAN'T WALK ANY MORE. YOU WILL HAVE TO CARRY ME.

YES, DEAR I WILL.

"AND KRISHNA DISAPPEARED. REALISING THAT IT WAS HER VANITY THAT HAD MADE HER LOSE KRISHNA, SHE WAS FILLED WITH REMORSE.

O LORD! WHERE ARE YOU? DON'T LEAVE ME.

"BY THE TIME HER COMPANIONS TOO REACHED THE SPOT, SHE HAD FALLEN IN A SWOON. WHEN REVIVED, SHE SAID—

I INSULTED HIM OUT OF VANITY, SO HE DISAPPEARED.

"THE GOPIKAS WENT FURTHER AND FURTHER IN SEARCH OF KRISHNA.

THE FOREST IS VERY DENSE BEYOND THIS.

YES, IT'S TOO DARK. LET'S GO BACK.

"THEY RETURNED TO THE BANKS OF YAMUNA AND WAITED, SINGING SONGS IN PRAISE OF KRISHNA.

O KRISHNA, HOW WE LONG TO SEE YOU. WE BESEECH YOU TO COME BACK TO US.

"FILLED WITH ANXIETY, MANY OF THEM BURST INTO TEARS. JUST THEN—

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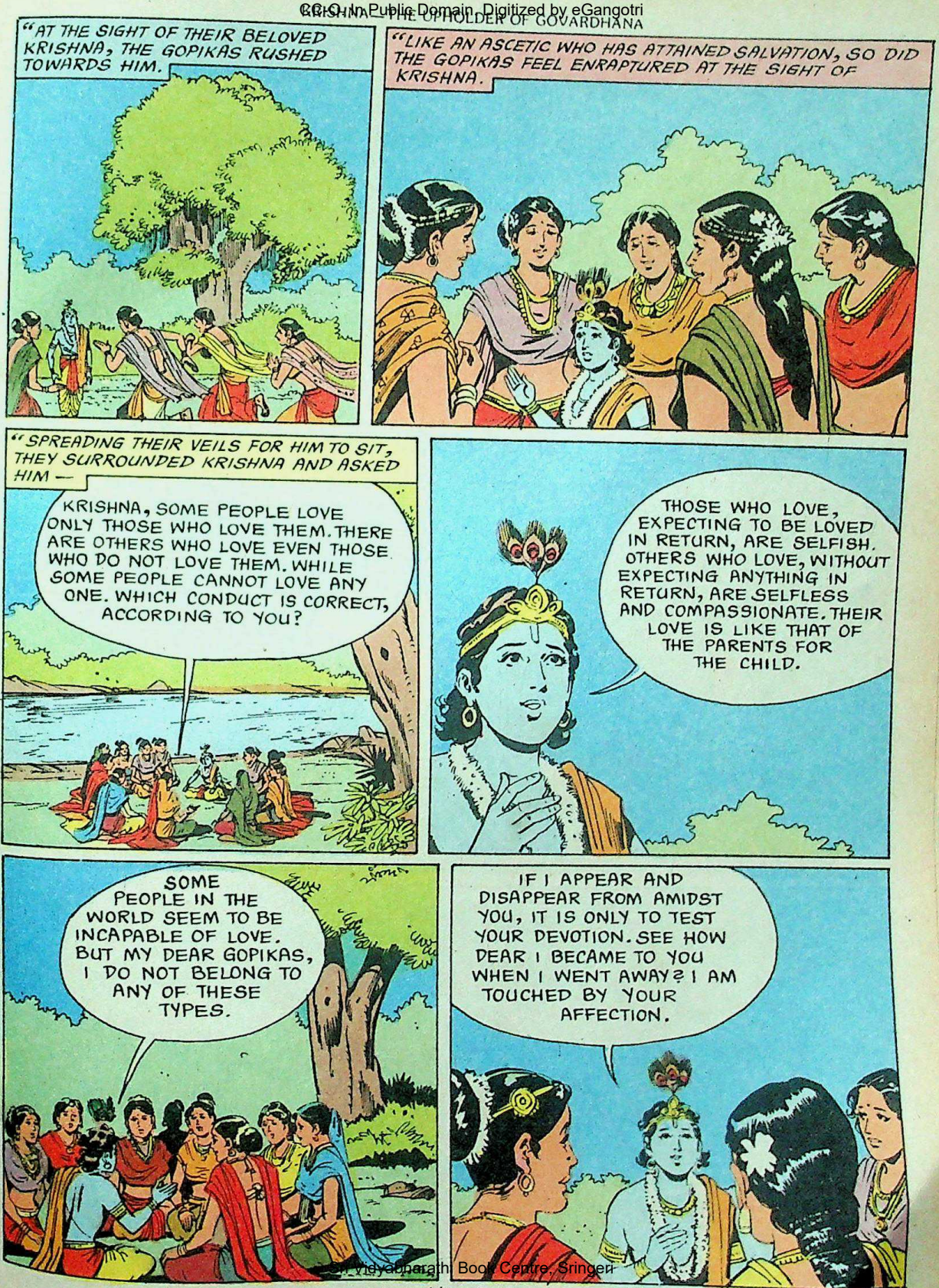

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THE GOPIKAS WERE NOW REASSURED, AND STOOD IN A CIRCLE AROUND KRISHNA.

"KRISHNA NOW BEGAN HIS RAS-LILA. MIRACULOUSLY THERE APPEARED ONE KRISHNA BY THE SIDE OF EACH GOPIKA.

THE GOPIKAS, EACH OF THEM, WERE ELATED TO HAVE THEIR BELOVED KRISHNA DANCING NEXT TO THEM.

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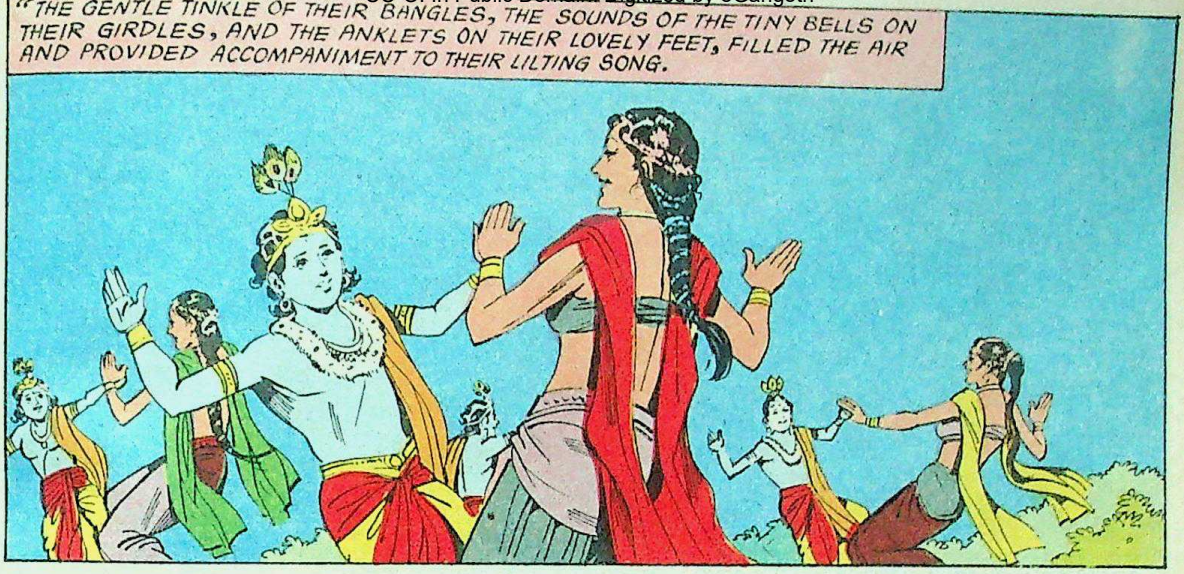

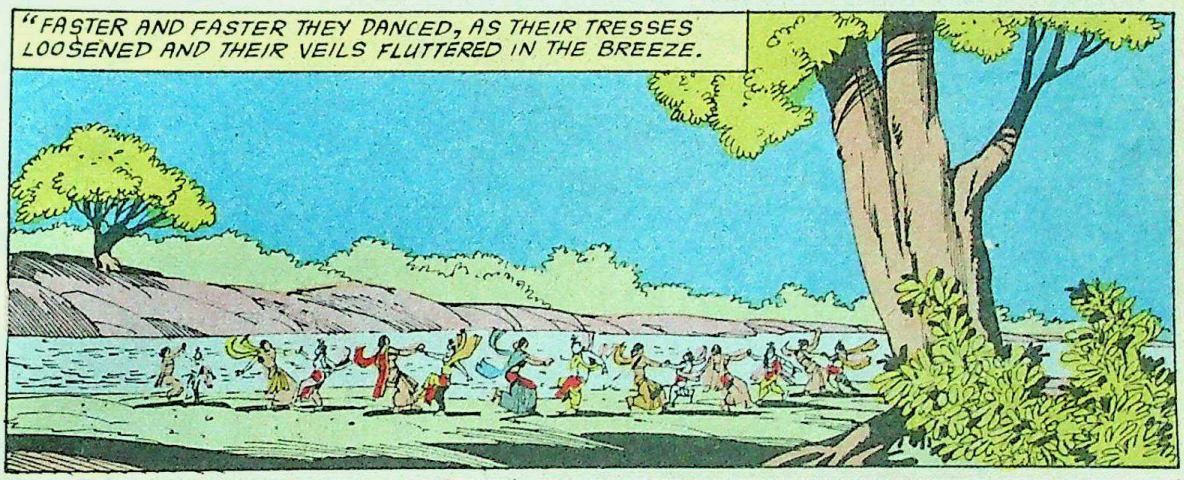

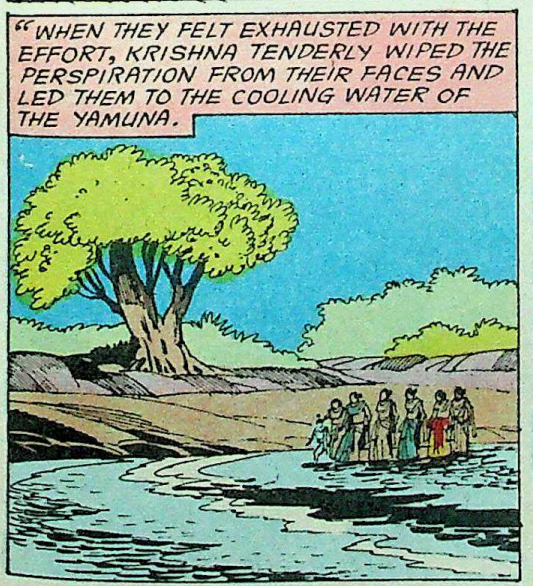

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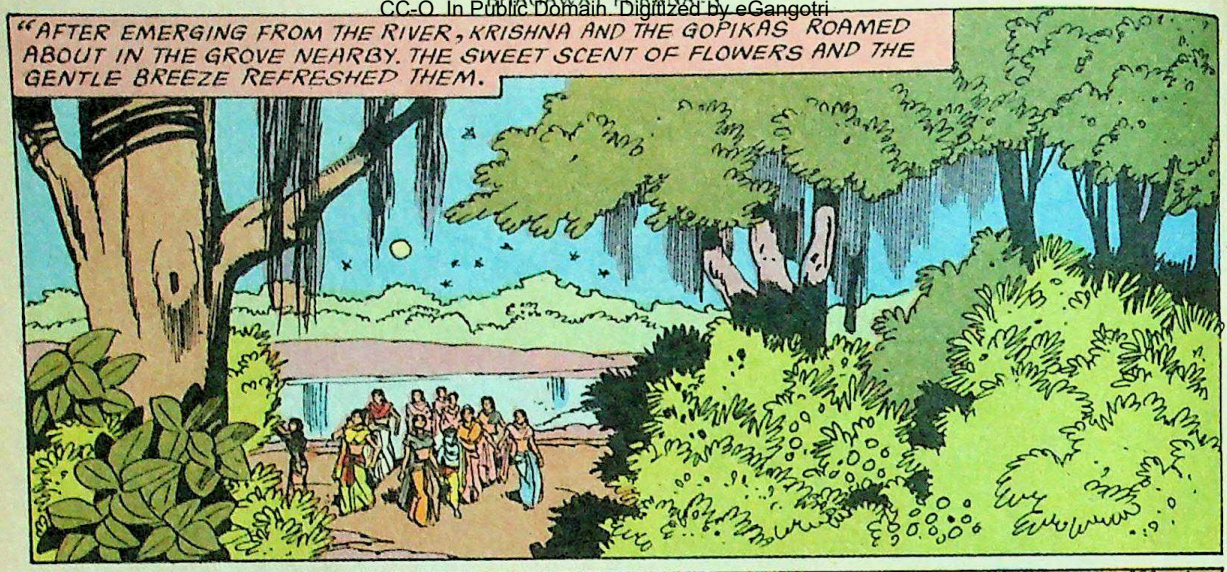

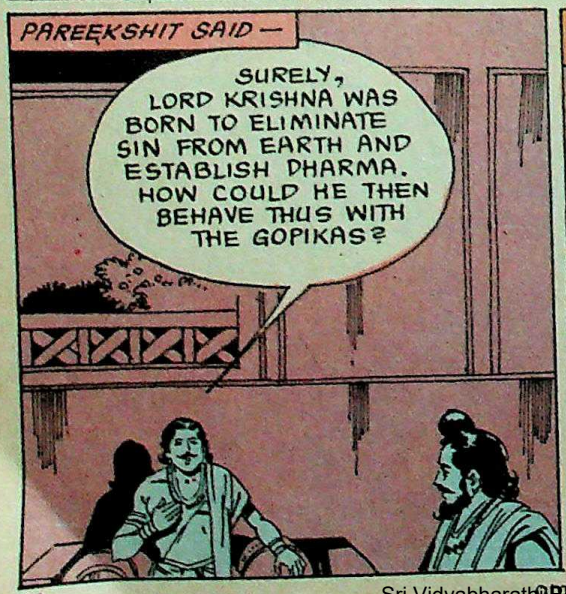

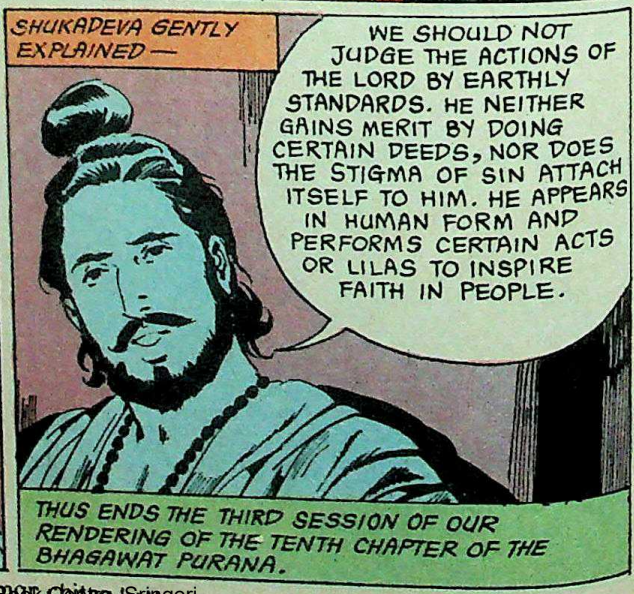

"AFTER EMERGING FROM THE RIVER, KRISHNA AND THE GOPIKAS ROAMED ABOUT IN THE GROVE NEARBY. THE SWEET SCENT OF FLOWERS AND THE GENTLE BREEZE REFRESHED THEM.

"RELUCTANT AS THEY WERE TO GO, KRISHNA THEN BADE THE GOPIKAS TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES.

PAREEKSHIT SAID —

SURELY, LORD KRISHNA WAS BORN TO ELIMINATE SIN FROM EARTH AND ESTABLISH DHARMA. HOW COULD HE THEN BEHAVE THUS WITH THE GOPIKAS?

SHUKADEVA GENTLY EXPLAINED —

WE SHOULD NOT JUDGE THE ACTIONS OF THE LORD BY EARTHLY STANDARDS. HE NEITHER GAINS MERIT BY DOING CERTAIN DEEDS, NOR DOES THE STIGMA OF SIN ATTACH ITSELF TO HIM. HE APPEARS IN HUMAN FORM AND PERFORMS CERTAIN ACTS OR LILAS TO INSPIRE FAITH IN PEOPLE.

THUS ENDS THE THIRD SESSION OF OUR RENDERING OF THE TENTH CHAPTER OF THE BHAGAWAT PURANA.

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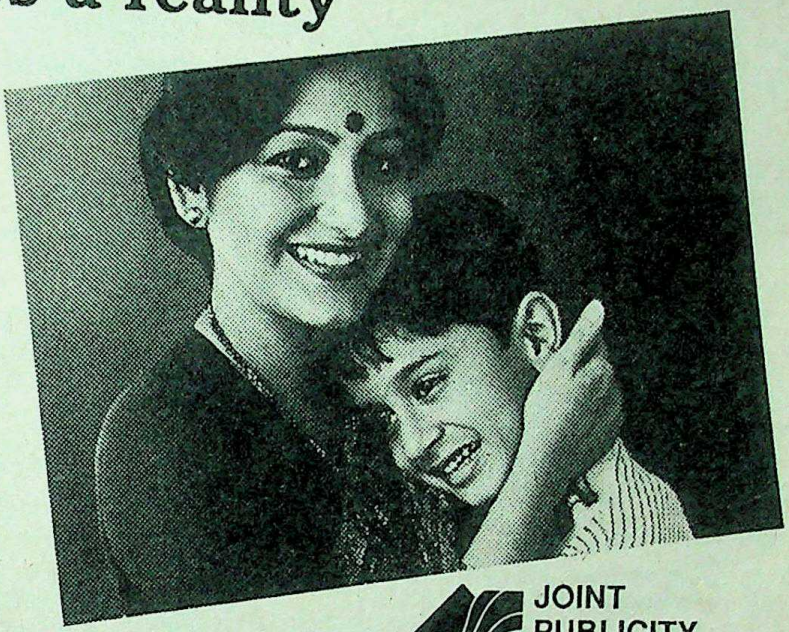
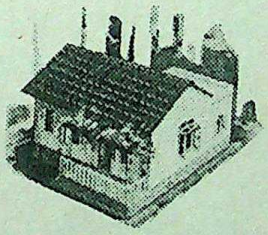
A home for your loved ones becomes a reality



You've always dreamed of a house of your own – but the high cost of housing puts it out of your reach. Now the Public Sector Banks make it possible to make your dream a reality.

Who is eligible?
Individuals, Housing Development Boards or Housing Finance Institutions, private builders, Economically Weaker Sections, i.e. with monthly income up to Rs.700/-, Scheduled Castes and Tribes, slum dwellers, persons affected by natural calamities and riots.

What can I use the loan for?
The loan can be used for:
- Purchase of house/flat
- Construction of a house or tenement
- Additions or extensions to an existing structure.



How much money will I get?
The maximum loan amount is Rs.3 lakhs per individual. The rate of interest is as follows:

	Your contribution	Interest
For SC/ST, up to and inclusive of Rs.5,000/-	20%	4.0%
For SC/ST, over Rs.5,000/- and up to Rs.20,000/- and for others, up to Rs.20,000/-	20%	12.5%
Above Rs.20,000/- and up to Rs.50,000/-	25%	13.5%
Above Rs.50,000/- and up to Rs.1 lakh	30%	14.0%
Above Rs.1 lakh and up to Rs.2 lakhs	35%	15.0%
Above Rs.2 lakhs and up to Rs.3 lakhs	35%	16.0%

What is the security?
The loan will be secured by mortgage of the property. Banks will also accept a security of adequate value in the form of life insurance policies, Government promissory notes, shares and debentures or gold ornaments.

What is the schedule of repayment?
The repayment period will be spread/extended up to 15 years.

For further details, please call at the nearest branch of any Public Sector Bank. We will be very happy to help you.

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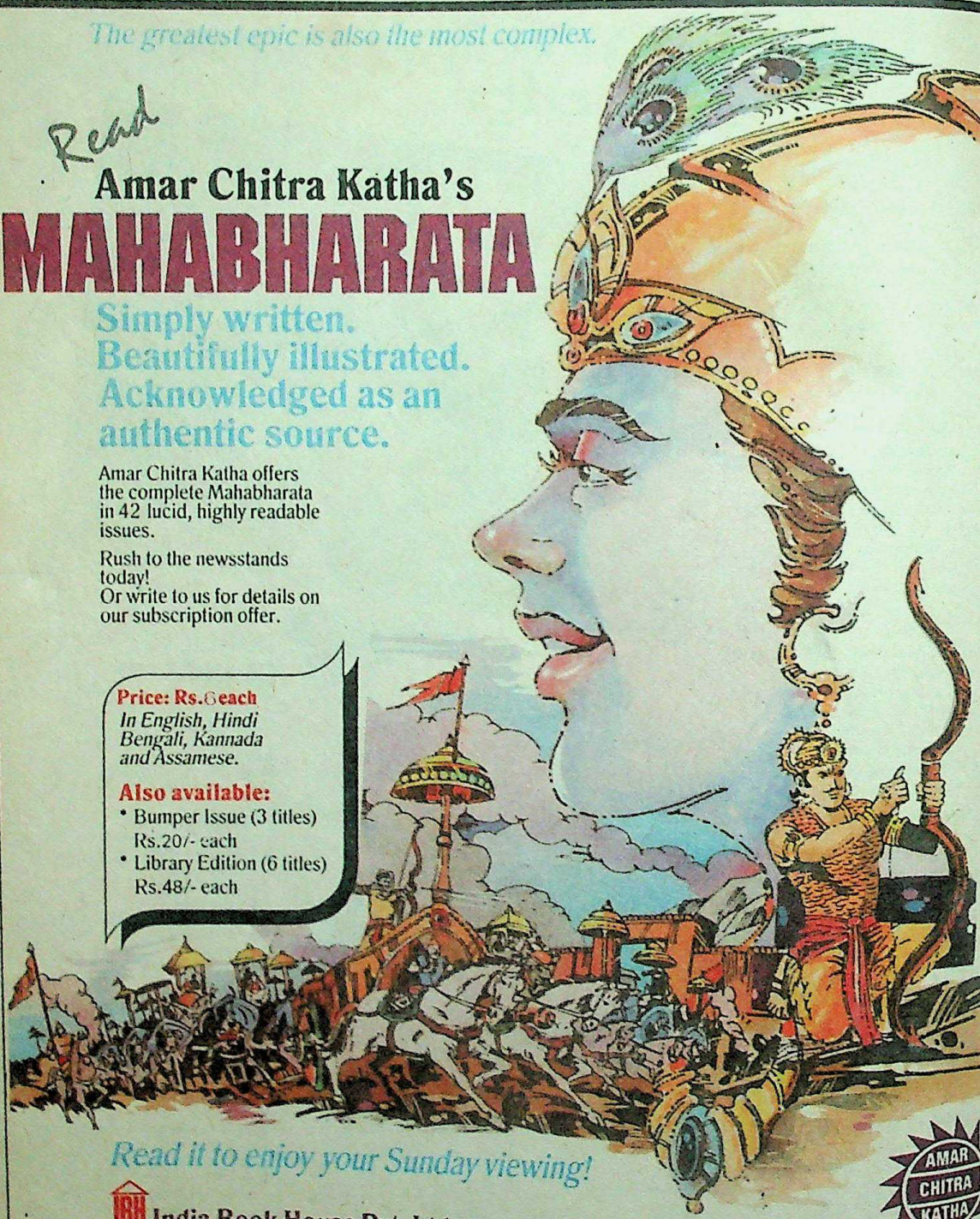

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